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VIEWS

OF

Society and Manners

IN THE

NORTH OF IRELAND,

IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1818.

BY JOHN GAMBLE, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "IRISH SKETCHES," "SARSFIELD,"
"NORTHERN IRISH TALES," &c.

As some lone miser visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleas'd with each good that heav'n to man supplies:
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small.

GOLDSMITH.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

A GREAT proportion of the inhabitants of the North of Ireland are the descendants of Scotchmen, settled here after the accession of James the First to the throne of England. In some of the maritime counties opposite to Scotland, the Irish were almost entirely expelled; the inhabitants, therefore, retain their Scotch manners in more primitive freshness. In this part of the country subjugation of the unfortunate native was equally complete, but expulsion was by no means so general; the new comers took possession only of the valleys and fertile spots, and kindly left the native the bogs and mountains. By degrees, as fear abated and rancour subsided, he crept slowly

down, and the lowly Presbyterian, who was now become of consequence enough to have another to do for him, what he was once happy to have to do himself, allowed him to labour the land which he once possessed; and when his spirit was fairly broken to his fortunes, treated his humble hewer of wood, and drawer of water, with something that resembled kindness.

In the progress of time, the two nations were in some degree intermingled; — Irish vivacity enlivened Scotch gravity; — Irish generosity blended with Scotch frugality, and a third character was formed, it would be presuming in me to say better than either, but certainly different from both. It is of this people, so peculiar, and until lately so little known, that I again venture to write; and by brief tale, by slight sketch, by occasional dialogue, and passing observation and recollection, endeavour to make better known.

For the few letters written from London, and on my way hither, some apology may be necessary; but having in early life lived much in the former, and often travelled over the latter, they presented scenes which I could not pass over without lingering; yet even in the midst of them, I did not altogether lose sight of my intended object. Perhaps amidst no scenes could I altogether lose sight of it, nor probably by the most elaborate dissertation, could I better describe my countrymen, than by an unreserved display of my own feelings, and by shewing myself as I am. On this subject let me remark, that these letters are, in many parts, transcripts of real ones written to a distant and very dear friend, and therefore that some interminglement of self was unavoidable. Of importance too, as man ever is to himself, he is apt to think that he is so to others, and possibly I flattered myself that the public might not be unwilling to know something of one, who, though in an humble degree, had

contributed to their amusement, and who trusts that he will never forfeit their good opinion by the flattery of prejudice, whether national or individual, or by the expression of a corrupt or immoral thought.

VIEWS

OF

SOCIETY, &c

LETTER I.

London.

That I should still be here you will wonder, and I almost wonder myself; but I knew London early, I have known it long; it was the scene of many a youthful joy, and youthful sorrow too; the joy and sorrow long are over, but their recollection remains. The friends who passed St. Paul's with me have passed away, but its heavy clock still rolls mellow on my accustomed ear. Those with whom I trod Westminster abbey, tread it no longer, but its dusky aisles almost give me back their tall figures and lengthening shades. In the stained glass and hollow organ, I see as it were, these sights, and hear the sounds of other and better days.

However I shall leave this at the furthest in a few weeks; I shall once more visit the

land of my fathers, then go where I originally proposed; but go wheresoever I may, never shall I forget my obligations to you; I can converse with you no longer, but I shall write until I can write no more.

I trust it has been otherwise with you, but the weather here has for some time past been frightful; my remembrance, (it is more now than young remembrance,) can scarce find its parallel; however, yesterday was fine, and I walked in the park; it was crowded, and black seemed still the prevailing colour. But though the garb is thus worn, the mourning in reality long is gone, and the Princess Charlotte is almost as much forgotten as if she had never lived. This you will scarcely credit, and rarely, I admit, has death taken place under circumstances more calculated to make a lasting, as well as deep impression; she was innocent and young — she was the affectionate daughter of a joyless mother, and she was about to be a joyful mother herself. The highest raised moment of expectation was the absolute extinction of hope, and the dreary vacancy of a November morning was broken on, not by the merry peals of rejoicing, but by the dismal tolling of a solitary bell. My heart at the sound melted within me, and the tears, I am not ashamed to acknowledge, spite of myself, dropped from my eyes, as I thought of this fair lily thus un-

timely broken — this blooming rose shaken before it was fully blown.

But grief for the death of those whom we have scarcely seen, and never personally known, is, of all our short-lived feelings, the most short-lived. The very next day, or at the most the day after, I eat my bread and drank my wine, if not as a great king directs, with a merry heart, at least with my usual one. My sensibility, I believe, is not less than that of other men; and I may fairly presume that the measure of their sorrow was not greater than my own. I fear, therefore, God forgive me if I be wrong, that the face of woe so long and ostentatiously worn, was affectation soon, and at the last was neither more nor less than downright hypocrisy. It was in truth scarcely possible to be in society, without observing the laborious effort to keep individual feeling at the general standard; lashing up slumbering sorrow, as a boy does his top, lest it should fall before its companions.

In this sentimental deception, the newspapers bore a conspicuous part; the people were marshalled like mourners at a funeral, and instructed to manage gracefully their white handkerchiefs, and to sob and sigh in all the elegance of woe. In a particular manner one paper was the Grimaldi of this grimace; and, as the Princess of Abyssinia

did on the loss of her favourite, it stole each day a few moments from its Atlas-like labours, to dwell on the good qualities, and to mourn the loss of the deceased. This I suppose was intended to show to a wondering world, that the people of England knew the exact measure of joy and sorrow, as well as of praise and censure; and that, while beyond all others they had taken the greatest liberty with Princes, beyond all others they could mourn for them.

I say more on this subject than perhaps you will think necessary, but if there be a vice which I detest more than another, it is hypocrisy, and, so unaccountably do nations change, it is the one to which the people of England seem now the most prone; it is an ominous as well as odious one, for it is sure, and speedily too, to be followed by open and avowed profligacy. In this instance there was not only the hypocrisy of vanity, but I fear of hate, and dislike of the living was conveyed by mourning for the dead; grace and renown it not unintelligibly said were fled; the wine of life was drawn, and there was remaining only the dregs: this sentiment, or rather the application of it, is your own. How I came to know this you will wonder, but I shall not leave you to wonder.

I was returning on the walk, when a servant accosted me and said his mistress wished

to speak to me: it was your friend Mrs. D. with her young family; she civilly made room for me in her carriage, and I was lucky enough to get seated without hurting the Lilliputian party. Your friend I believe is thought a wit, or, which is just as well, she thinks herself one.

"Seven times I nodded to you," said she, "and all the time you took no more notice than the statue in Don Juan." "I am sorry" I replied, "but at the distance we were asunder, you might have nodded to me to eternity, and I have been no wiser than the pedestal on which the statue stands." "O true, I had forgot," said she carelessly, "that you are blind."

There are ladies who think even their rudeness becoming; your friend I am sure is not such a one, but her vivacity makes her at times heedless, and wit you know is proverbially forgetful.

She took me home with her to dinner, and in the evening she showed me your verses on the subject we have just been talking of. I am glad you have betaken yourself to poetry, for it will cheer you on your wearisome voyage; "the Hours" mythologists tell us, "dance before the chariot of Apollo." Your verses, like all I ever heard you utter, breathe goodness, but even goodness may lead us astray; and do you not apprehend that in

your judgment of an illustrious Personage, it has a little misled you? On domestic discord there rests a mist too dark to penetrate; but placable as women are in general, there are faults which they rarely, I will not say never, forgive; and after death it is better to have a bad epitaph, than their ill report, which is worse even than the players', while alive. There is no royal road, it is said, to mathematics; I am sure there is none to ladies' good will.

LETTER II.

London.

For a wonder I was last night at Drury Lane, and nothing could be worse than the scene behind the curtain, except the scene before. The audience sat like guilty creatures, waiting the coming of the play; I was on the front seat of the pit, and, in familiar language, could not quarrel with my company, for I had the entire bench to myself; the play was a dull comedy, written I know not by whom, and revived I know not on what account. I left the house before the performance was over.

It is but justice to this unfortunate theatre to say, that the only other time I was there this season, I was more fortunate; the play was Hamlet. You know my fondness for the theatre, and will therefore pardon me a few remarks on this celebrated play.

That it is defective as a drama, is saying little, for almost all the great author's dramas are the same; but in many respects it is peculiarly, and even perversely so. Hamlet treats Ophelia with useless cruelty, and he

murders her father almost in sport; he mourns sincerely over the grave of his unfortunate mistress, yet the very ensuing scene we find him coolly moralising with Horatio, amusing himself with the language and manner of Osrick, and finally, with no other misgiving than from his own selfishness, consenting to the mock combat with Laertes. The warm-hearted and high-spirited Laertes here loses all claim to our regard: indeed, the consistency of his character is entirely destroyed, by his consenting to the king's vile and pitiful device; nor is it more vile and pitiful, than it is bungling and inartificial.

Besides, as the Greeks used to do with Hercules, we ask, and no one I am sure can tell us, what has all this to do with the ghost, and such a ghost too, fierce, implacable, and unforgiving! Let loose from his prison-house with all his earthly imperfections on his head, unpurified by his wanderings in air, or his sufferings in fire; he seeks not justice but revenge, and it is not his visitation, after all, that whets his son's blunted purpose; the catastrophe is brought about by means with which the commencement has little to do; nor are the means more incongruous and contradictory, than the catastrophe is incongruous and unjust; though not the guiltless, yet the repentant queen, perishes as well as her guiltier husband. Hamlet and Laertes

fall together, and the venerable Polonius is murdered, while the fair Ophelia is drowned.

It is scarcely possible to follow to her watery grave this persecuted young female, without a helpless feeling of misery. Her dramatic life runs in one sad unvaried tenor, and ends in sorrow as it first began: unjustly suspected by her brother, contemptuously rated by her father, and barbarously treated by her lover, her heart is more broken than her head is disordered, and at the end she dies, not so much from madness as from grief. Weakness, as it may seem, I can never look on her funeral procession without a shuddering, only less than the horror with which I behold the decaying remains of wretched mortality scattered with brutal indifference around.

Yet to this revolting scene, much I am persuaded of the popularity of the play with the galleries is owing; and their thoughtless occupants laugh in hardened insensibility at the eyeless head and tongueless skull, which is all that will soon be of themselves. By the force of habit I suppose it is, that I myself smile at the grave-digger's endless throwing off of waistcoats; I remember that I laughed in the days of happy infancy, and that my fathers, and my fathers' fathers, in all probability did the same.

To this influence of association, much of the general pleasure we derive from the play may

be owing. But it has other and better sources: it has the merit, the merit of merits, of forcibly arresting the attention, and of creating an interest, which however by a fatality attendant on the great author, grows less towards the close. The scene between Hamlet and the ghost is almost of appalling interest, and we cannot help wondering at the soul-less want of taste of the dramatic critic, who would have confined it to the green-room. Reason disavows kindred with a ghost, but it is imagination's first-born and darling child. The wild idea touches our soul's finest chords, and, like the Æolian harp hung in the forest tree, it pours out to the midnight wind its dearest, though saddest sounds.

Having said so much of the play, I must perforce say something of the players. Far be it from me offensively to remark on a young and modest female, but surely those who put Miss Cubitt into the part of Ophelia, consulted her reputation as little as the theatre's good. Of the King and Queen it is saying enough, that they fretted and strutted "their hour on the stage," like other *poor* players, and at the last died as unlamented as, in those democratic times, even a real king or queen could have done.

Mr. Dowton's Polonius was so bad, that scarcely was it possible to be worse; and yet he is an actor, though I think his abilities are

over-rated, by no means wanting in comic powers. But his sins were of omission, not of commission: he did not out-Herod Herod, if I may so speak, he in-Heroded him. He played with his reputation round his neck, and, as he managed it, it was a mill-stone that weighed him down. As Mark Antony's was by Cæsar, his genius was rebuked by Munden, the inimitable performer of this part; and, fearful to offend, he never rose, or strove even to please.

Hamlet was done by Mr. Kean. You are not I know an admirer of this great actor; I join with the many in their applause of him. Hamlet is not considered as one of his happiest efforts; and no doubt there are considerable inequalities in his performance: but it is the character of genius to be unequal, and he is almost ever great when the subject is so. I would that you had seen him in the scene with Ophelia, that you too might have admired. His emendation was so simple, that we wonder how it was ever missed, yet so happy, that with our indignation against Hamlet, it mingles pity, and in a measure reconciles us to him.

It is evident that Hamlet loves Ophelia. Though fleetingly, he sincerely mourns her death, and in the language of impassioned feeling, tells Laertes that forty thousand brothers, with all their love, could not make

up the sum of his. When he treated her so cruelly therefore, he was merely playing a part. Kemble merely played a part; he counterfeited madness to perfection, and made his exits and his entrances, with well assumed mimic rage. But Kean gives the entire scene with more delicate colouring, and in the very torrent of his passion, begets a temperance which gives it smoothness. He all along mingles feeling with moroseness, and makes us doubt, whether it is in anger or in sorrow that he speaks. But he leaves us not in doubt; — he is about to depart, and is at the side-door even; — he looks back; — he looks on Ophelia; — nature is too strong for art, and he advances to her again; — he takes her by the hand, and gazes wishfully on her; — tears seem to fill his eyes, he presses her hand, and, amidst the applauses of the audience, retires. And rarely were applauses better deserved. This mute scene was as admirably done, as it was ingeniously conceived: every attitude was a picture, every gesture was a sentence, and, while they penetrated to the heart, gave equal pleasure to the eye.

A Frenchman, who happened to be sitting beside me, applauded as loudly as any. By the help of the play which he held in his hand, he seemed to enter fully into the cunning of the scene; and had I at that moment

asked him his opinion of Kean, it would I am sure have been a most favourable one. But I waited until the play was done.

"*C'est un joli acteur*," was his only answer to my question. "Is he as good a one as Talma?" I ventured to ask. "*Suis-je Hercule?*" he briefly and disdainfully replied. I would have conversed with him further, but he actually turned rudely away.

This is not the only instance I have of late seen of similar incivility, and I cannot help regarding it as one of the surest signs of the times that are to come; for what must be the pent-up feelings in Frenchmen's *bosoms*, when they forget the civility which was so habitual to them, as almost to be a part of themselves. I well remember that on the eve of our rebellion, those who knew the country best, were never thoroughly alarmed until they remarked the entire change in the manner and conduct of the people, and saw them go home from fair and market as sober as they had come; they then said that the cloud which hung over us would soon come down in a storm.

LETTER III.

London.

How time passes! It is exactly ten weeks this day since you left London; you are I trust gliding over smooth seas and untroubled waters, while I am still here solitary and alone; and my longest journey has been to Richmond for a day. I returned by the steam-boat,—I would have returned, I should rather say, for we had not gone far until we were wrecked, happily without accident, on a green bank; and I walked the remainder of the way home, well satisfied that matters were no worse. A lady declared that as long as she lived, she would never take another voyage from Richmond to London; and between ourselves, I have nearly resolved the same. There were two things which a wise man of old said he repented of: the one was not very courteous to your sex, for it was having trusted a woman with a secret; the other was, his taking a journey by water, when he might as well have gone by land. Had there been steam-boats in his days, he would not, I dare say, have been the more reconciled to the watery element.

I dined on Sunday in Cavendish-street. There were more people at table than I can tell; and the amusements of the evening I shall not tell, for they were unbecoming the day. I was early taught to respect the Sabbath, and habit continues what prejudice, as many doubtless would reckon it, began.

I passed yesterday at Chelsea, with an old acquaintance whom I knew while abroad. He is an honest Highlander of the clan of Lovat, and christened Simon, in memory I presume of the unfortunate chief of that name. I would have set him on talking of his native hills, but a mist was over his recollections, impenetrable as that which so often rests on the hills themselves.

To make amends for his forgetfulness of the dusky mountains, he had remembrances of warfare in plenty: — he served in the American war, and was captured with Bourgoyne, and not a dell, dingle, or glade was there of their laborious march, that he did not describe with a minuteness which, were he living, would probably have edified the gallant general himself. My thoughts were often wandering, but they returned in time to express proper condolence for the injury which the nation sustained by the capture of Saratoga. It must have been very great, for my friend assured me, that the effects are felt even at the present day.

Though nearly sixty years have elapsed since he left Scotland, he has the accent as strong, as if he had only left it yesterday. With the erect gait of an old soldier, and the sinewy form of an old Highlandman, if he had something less of the recollections of the one, and something more of the reminiscences of the other, he would be a valuable acquisition to a writer of the present day. But his whole soul is in war. Not with the heroic tartan and bonnet of our story books, but with the close coat and triangular hat of modern war.

It is I suppose from this predilection, that he chooses Chelsea for his residence. The hospital is his favourite walk, where, in conversation with some aged pensioners, I dare say he wiles away many a weary hour.

" Talks o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
" Shoulders his crutch, and shows how fields were won."

He took me through the Hospital. He likewise took me to the military asylum, where we saw the children go to dinner. The boys marched in gaily to the sound of the drum. It was the regulator of their devotion, as well as of their march. On the signal, a boy with a loud voice said grace. The drum again struck, and the numerous group were seated, as if they had only one body. The Duke of York is the patron of the institution, and a full length picture of him hangs in the hall.

My friend called it a full length likeness, but this is a mistake. A lady might fall in love with the picture, and still not view the Royal original *con amore*.

The sergeant-major who led us about, I soon discovered was a countryman of my own. He was born, he told me, in the county of Fermanagh, and had served twenty-five years in the Enniskillen dragoons. In the society of Scotchmen, I know not what you would have taken him for, but in the society of Englishmen, I am sure you would have taken him for a Scotchman.

In justice to my hostess, I must say, that we had a comfortable dinner without a single dish of Scotch cookery. I partook freely of my host's home-brewed ale. Of home-brewed wine I am no admirer; and how seldom is wine now to be met with, that in a greater or lesser degree, is not home-brewed?

I did not return until it was late. However, I had no fear of robbers, for it was moonlight, and I had a sturdy Scotchman, a gallant officer just returned from abroad, by my side. I have heard and read of many extraordinary instances of the effects of fear.

The following, which he related to me, seems as extraordinary as any:

Two soldiers of the garrison to which he belonged, were brought out for execution, with all the melancholy pomp attendant on

such occasions. One of them was almost immediately thrown off — the other remained on his knees at the foot of the gallows, the mute spectator of his companion's agony. He was desired by his commanding officer to stand up; and, at that moment of the death of hope, his life was granted to him. But sentence was already passed by a power which does not pardon. Nature was too weak to bear the mighty shock, and he fell to the ground like one who receives the thunderstroke; in this state of insensibility he was borne home, and spite of every application he died a few hours afterwards.

The contempt of death which soldiers seem to show in the field of battle, appears almost supernatural. But in reality, it is not so much contempt of death, as forgetfulness of it. When danger is inevitable, we all tremble almost alike; and I question, whether Cæsar's heart, as the assassins' weapons gleamed to his sight, did not give him as sharp a pang as mine gave me, when stuck on a rock, and instantly thinking to perish, I cast my eyes on the howling storm, the furious waves, the whitening foam, and labouring ship. Nature is uniform, and as she has made us almost all equal with regard to the miseries of life, so has she hedged us in with nearly an equal horror of death.

LETTER IV.

London.

THE weather has long been delightful, yet still am I here, sauntering in dusty streets, when I might be wandering in green meadows, and listening to the song of the drawing-room, instead of the nightingale of the grove.

But a few nights ago, I am bound to suppose that I heard even the nightingale outdone. You are I believe, aware of my acquaintance with Mr. Braham. Independent of his extraordinary musical powers, he is a man whose society I like. His habits seem entirely domestic, and he appears as happy in his family, as by his kindness to all who compose it, he deserves to be. He had a great musical party on Wednesday, and he was good enough to ask me. That I accepted of the invitation, you will not doubt. I have little musical skill, but for musical fondness, I will yield to few. Nature has close barred my eyes to objects, but, to make amends, she has opened wide my ears to sounds.

The company were about half assembled when I came. Some card tables were form-

ed, but the music had not begun. Mr. Fawcett and Sir George Smart were playing whist. A number of foreigners, principally I believe Italians, were standing looking on the cards. I stood looking on the players. Shortly I had more *players* to look at, for almost at the instant Mr. and Mrs. C. Kemble and Mrs. Liston were announced. We are strange creatures! We clothe players with the imaginary qualities of their fictitious existences. We are gratified to divest them of the drapery in which our fancies arrayed them, and to see them as they are.

The rooms now became crowded. The music books were opened, and Sir George Smart was taken from the whist table to the piano-forte. Had I not heard him announced I should, from the intelligence of his eye, have guessed him to be either poet or musician. The piano-forte sounded as he was seating himself; the spontaneous movement of the ladies, and the indistinct sound of their voices and fans, shewed how highly their expectations were raised.

The fair audience had good reason for expectation, for the musical group now assembled could scarcely any where be equalled, and no where perhaps be excelled. Beside our host, who, if I may so speak, was an *host* in himself, there were Madame Fodor and Signior Ambrogetti of the Opera House, Miss Stephens,

Miss Goodall, Miss Corri, Miss Byrne, with many others.

Alternately they took their stand at the piano; and in hearkening to the dulcet song of those syrens, (the Emperor Tiberius puzzled a Greek sophist, by asking him what the song of the syrens was,) the hours flew unnoted away. The music was exclusively Italian, and several of the compositions were of exquisite beauty; there were others, in which sentiment and meaning, to my apprehension at least, were sacrificed to sound. This I fear is the almost unavoidable consequence of the refinement of musical taste; it separates so widely the heart from the ear, that pure melody can scarcely reach it. Modern music seems most calculated to display brilliance of execution; those like me whose zeal is greater than their knowledge, have therefore to lament that the charm of music is too often sacrificed to the ostentation of skill, and complication of harmony. This intricacy, I am sure, overwhelms many who profess to be pleased with it.

Between one and two we went to supper; I had a very pleasant lady, though I rather think not a professional one, on my right hand, and Miss Byrne sat on my left. The circumstances under which this deserving young woman chose the stage as a profession, insures to her the good wishes of every humane person; she has a particular claim on mine, for to the hospita-

lity of an uncle of hers, I was some years ago often indebted. Though her vocal powers are not of the highest order, they are respectable. Nature has not been unkind, nor has art been spared; perhaps it has been lavished, and I am sure she is lavish of it; but good sense is as necessary to singing, as Horace says it is to writing well; true song, like true wit, is only nature to advantage dressed, and should never be over adorned.

Rather than all be ornament, let none be there.

Of Madame Fodor it is difficult with moderation to speak, and I would give much that you had heard her; the chaste simplicity of her manner could alone be the result of exquisite taste, united to exquisite art; it was indeed the perfection of art, for while it decked her song with music's choicest beauties, it was hid in the wreath which itself had prepared.

She was quite the Calliope of our party, and every one who at all knew her, seemed eager to pay her their respects. There is in her countenance an expression of goodness, which gives the most favourable idea of her heart and disposition. But can woman or man either be a great musician without a good heart? It is impossible: those who have no sympathetic feeling of tenderness can never fully convey the higher beauties of song, and if we would

move others, we must first be moved ourselves. It is to this that Miss Stephens owes her charms; and not to her voice, which is not superior; nor to her science, which is not extraordinary; nor to her manner, which oftentimes is not good.

Immediately after supper, Mrs. and Miss Corri were called on to sing; they sang the duet of Roy's wife of Aldivalloch; they might easily I think have chosen a better; I have heard it remarked for the simplicity of its melody, but it seems to me more remarkable for its monotony.

Neither Madame Fodor nor Miss Stephens sang at the supper table; Ambrogetti, who sat between them, seemed to occupy them sufficiently. If I may judge by the smiles of Miss Stephens, he is as entertaining in conversation as in song; he had given us before supper several of his buffo songs, with the humour for which he is so remarkable. On these occasions I generally stole for a few moments a seat, for the young ladies were all on tip-toe to observe his countenance and action.

Mr. Liston performed that night both in the play and farce, and therefore did not come in until it was late; I was glad to see and converse with him; he is a pleasing and unaffected man, as unassuming in his manner as in his talk. I was forcibly struck with the contrast between the display of Ambrogetti, and his

seeming unconsciousness that he too was a general object of regard.

Some such observation I made to two ladies; and Mr. C. Kemble, who was standing near, seemed to misunderstand me, as if I undervalued Mr. Liston by the comparison. I intended the very reverse; scarcely any one values his powers more highly; which are the more admirable, as while even to the opening of the mouth they are comic, they are so without effort.

Were I consulted by a melancholy patient, I should send him in the morning to Primrose Hill to gather flowers, and in the evening to Covent Garden to see Liston in Rob Roy; nothing can exceed his delineation of the Baillie, who is the principal character; it is in truth not acting; it is the character itself stepped from the pedestal of the author's imagination, and by some Promethean fire warmed into life. He told me that the moment he read the novel, the Baillie struck him as a genuine dramatic personage; Dominie Samson is spoken of, said he, but the Baillie speaks.

Mr. Liston assumes the Scotch accent to perfection, yet he was never in Scotland but once, and then only for eight or ten days; at first he hesitated whether or not he should play the part in Scotch, but luckily decided that he should; yet Scotchmen, he told me, object to his accent as not being sufficiently

Scotch; but Scotchmen should remember, that on this subject they are not the best judges, but almost the worst: for we only consider the accent strong, which is stronger than our own; the man who is accustomed to brandy, has but a faint relish for the taste of wine.

I wish that I may not lose my relish for solitude, for I actually live too much in society; like the departing taper, my abode in London waxes brighter towards its close.

Your friend Mrs. C—— gave a great dinner party yesterday; it was a dull dinner, but dinners I think generally are dull, and the evening was better; there was a whole host of beauties, but it would be endless to name them to you as they made their graceful entrances, and exits, I may add, for there were many who seemed to come, only to go.

Almost the foremost in going was the youngest Miss G——; she looked quite melancholy; poor girl! with little other fortune than her beauty, she was instructed to look to marriage, not as an association of inclination, but as the means of procuring an establishment for life: difficult lesson for the youthful heart, glowing as it does with the best sensibilities of our nature, to learn; nor could she learn it. A few weeks ago she was asked in marriage by a rich, but elderly, and I understand not very agreeable man; she refused,

and the ill humour of her mother, it is possible, makes her almost regret the refusal.

I was introduced to a literary lady, of great merit no doubt, though to confess the truth I never heard her name mentioned before; the celebrated Miss —— she was termed by a gentleman in speaking of her, but loud enough for her to hear; delightful sound to the fair young poet, even though her understanding might detect the deception, and her reason tell her that her celebrity extended not beyond the circle in which she stood.

After all, how few female poets are there whose celebrity extends to a much wider bound? On how many has flattery been lavished, whose memory did not outlive their life even the half of Hamlet's half year? It would be amusing, if it were not melancholy, to read the praises which Miss Seward's correspondents bestow on her, and which she bestows on herself; alas! her poetry is forgotten, and she herself is scarcely remembered.

LETTER V.

Oxford.

You will be pleased to hear that I have got thus far on my journey. I left London on Tuesday morning by the Wallingford coach. There was only one other inside passenger—a lady, nor was she a talkative one; she looked out at one window, and I looked out at the other. Voltaire says, that the happiness of man consists in seeing a fine crop on his fields. It is a happiness which I never yet have had, nor I dare say ever shall, but still it is some to see green fields and spreading woods.

We breakfasted at Hounslow. We had here the accession of our outside passengers, of whom one was an Italian; his French was as indifferent as my own, and he scarcely spoke a word of English, though he had lived the last seven years of his life, he told me, in London.

On our return to the coach, I found my fair companion more communicative. It might be from the exhilarating effects of the tea, or more likely from my having conversed during breakfast on literary subjects. I have gene-

rally found ladies competent to speak on these subjects, and listening with complacency to the man that does; whether you regard his selection of such topics as a compliment; or, great compliment to literature, consider that where it is, honesty must be also. Alas! the pity, they are oftentimes no kin to each other.

As the day advanced, the heat became excessive. We raised dust enough of ourselves, but the heavy laden vehicles which every moment passed us, raised it in clouds. We were oppressed with heat when we had the windows up, and we were almost suffocated when we let them down. The Italian came inside to take shelter from the burning sun. "You see, Monsieur," said I to him, "that the sun does visit England at times." "Yes," replied he, "*at times*, as the swallows do, and in as great a hurry to leave it."

We reached Wallingford about four o'clock, and short as was the journey, I was fairly jaded with it. I got therefore a novel from the library, called Rhoda, and passed the evening in reading it. It had been highly recommended to me by my late fellow-traveller, and it must therefore be attributed to my want of taste that I did not like it. It seemed one of those evangelical productions which weigh girls' thoughts, words, and actions, in a balance, nice as apothecary's scales, and would saga-

ciously regulate youth with the exactness of a game of chess.

The following day I visited my old friends and my old walks, and found the former as little changed as the latter. Almost the first person I met in the street was the Bishop of Durham. This venerable old Prelate is upwards of eighty years of age, yet he walks and rides with the activity of a much less advanced period, and as he is extremely attentive to his dress, his appearance is equally reverend and prepossessing. He is said to be a good man, though I do not understand that he has ever been reckoned a learned one; but he is a wise one, or at all events, he has made a wise choice. After personal merit, I have somewhere seen it remarked, that high station and pompous title are the most splendid mark of distinction, and he who cannot be an Erasmus, must, if he can, be a Bishop.

After tea, I walked in his Lordship's grounds, with the family with which I had dined.—They are not extensive, but they are beautiful. The sun had gone downwards on his course, but had he even been in meridian splendour, the thick groves and overshadowing trees would have sheltered us from his heat. We walked until it was late, and as the twilight deepened, the soft notes of the nightingale were heard at shorter intervals, amidst the full chorus of the other birds.

The tones produced by this charming little bird are modulated into strains so plaintive, and at the same time so melodious, that it is scarcely possible to listen to them unmoved. Its favourite haunt is the coppice and hedge, where it will remain for weeks together if undisturbed. Oh, why should it ever be disturbed, or why should we trouble happiness far greater than our own? We climb mountains and cross oceans, yet have we in all our wanderings, sensations half so delicious as those with which the nightingale soothes itself, as it pours forth its sweet strains beneath the greenwood tree?

The following day I confined my walks to the street, where I met with several of the beauties of the place, availing themselves like me of the benefit of the shade.

Two of these fair Helens had like to have caused mischance to no less a personage than the imperial Alexander himself. They were at the White Hart at Benson's, waiting to have a sight of him as he stopped there on his way to Oxford. In return, he was so occupied with the sight of them, that he did not pay attention to his footing, and he tumbled, not down, but up the stairs. "Vous êtes vous fait du mal, mon frère" exclaimed the Duchess of Oldenburgh, starting forward to raise him. "Point du tout ma sœur," replied the Emperor, laughing at his own awkwardness.

In a Greek play, the street was the seat of many a strange scene, and he who walks through the streets of a borough town on the eve of an election, will, if he shuts not his eyes, see strange scenes too. Wallingford has long been famous for its corruption. Every housekeeper has a vote, and he is careful not to throw it away. After it is given, he gets, by some indirect means or other, the sum of forty pounds, and it is not, you know, then a bribe, but as Foigard says, only a gratification. However, the spirit of reform, so active at present in London, has extended even to Wallingford. The people seem generally ashamed of their own venality, and several have declared their solemn resolution of receiving no longer the wages of iniquity, as they did not scruple to call it.

The present candidates have represented the borough several years, for they have both of them the indispensable qualification; and notwithstanding the murmurs of individuals, they will, I have no doubt, represent it again. There are, I am persuaded, more righteous persons in Wallingford, small as it is, than there were in the great city of Nineveh; still the majority are too much attached to the goodly flesh-pots which they have so long been fed from, all at once to give up their savoury mess. I know not in truth, that I

should counsel them, for I am no advocate for impracticable virtue. Corruption has taken too deep root, to be shaken without a storm, which will shake the earth along with it, and they, as well as others, may have the benefit, whilst it lasts, of its shade.

However that be, it is curious to remark the connection of good and evil, and how inseparable the one is from the other. At an election, there is riot and drunkenness, as well as corruption, and there is oftentimes too, hatred and all manner of uncharitableness. But there is hope, and there is fear, and expectation, and disappointment, and victory, and defeat. It lessens distances, and it closes up the straggling ranks of society. It weakens strength, for it shows it its weakness, and it strengthens weakness, for it shows it its strength. Would not the vices of an English election, were they even greater than they are, happily break on the green and weed-grown stagnation of the human mind in a German village, where the baron and the peasant root themselves in dull and dozed ease together?

Though the people of Wallingford are politically wicked, in private life they are moral and good. There is scarcely any crime; and a magistrate and a prison are almost useless alike. During my wearisome confinement there, I do not recollect a single offence,

except that of a man, a stranger too, passing some bad shillings, and there was as great an outcry as if they had taken a murderer.

A number of the inhabitants are dissenters; I have been in company with their present, as well as their former clergyman. They are both intelligent men, and they are better, for they are virtuous and religious ones. Dissenters naturally are partial to each other, and at the period I allude to, I experienced much kindness from several of them: nor was the kindness confined to my suffering body, but was humanely extended to my immortal soul. Beside much spiritual confabulation, I had a store of books sent me, Calvinistic enough, if I may judge by the parts I dipped into, to have satisfied John Knox himself.

Calvinism indeed is by no means confined to the dissenters. A gentleman with whom I took tea one Sunday evening, could not have done talking of a sermon he had just heard preached by the curate of the church to which he belonged; and reprobated the poor preacher, as if, instead of good works, he had recommended evil ones. Happily, morality is not inconsistent with any religious opinions whatsoever, and this condemner of good works is a most excellent man.

This morning, after an early breakfast, a friend drove me to Dorchester in his gig. I might as well, however, have staid for a late

one, for I was obliged to pass several hours in the village ale-house, waiting for a conveyance. The first that came was not of auspicious augury, for it is the last that we are ever to be driven in. The next was filled inside and out with voters going to the Worcester election. It was no more a silent than it was a mourning one; and with the awful vehicle of mortality full in their view, they were as noisy and merry, as if, like the poet of old, they found argument, even in the fleetingness of life, for enjoyment.

At length I got seated in a coach. We speedily passed the hearse; for sorrow you know is proverbially dry, and the mourners had stopped to refresh themselves. I asked one of them the name of the deceased. From the number of his attendants, I expected to hear that he was of rank, but he had only been a tradesman in London. He was taking down to Wolverhampton, of which place he was a native, by his own particular desire. Unaccountable feeling of our nature, which makes us solicitous after the spot where our bones are to lie! Strange attachment to our native earth! which we wander from when living, but love to moulder in when dead!

We got here about four o'clock, and the coach stopped at the Angel. It is a fallen, or rather a falling angel, and I proceeded to the Mitre, where, in homely phrase, I am at this present writing.

I think I have read that Mozart or Gluck, or some other great musician, never composed without a flask of wine at his side; and in humble imitation, I have a small flask of sherry at mine. How different though is this hot and inflammatory liquor from the light and cooling, yet cheering and animating, claret which I so lately drank in France; the delicious beverage of a warm climate and summer's day; and not more productive of pleasurable sensation, than conducive to health, by the glorious system of perpetual warfare, like the apples before Tantalus, placed here within our sight, but without our reach.

Oxford is almost deserted at present, for it is vacation time. I might indeed have judged this by the number of young ladies I met a little while ago in the high street. This beautiful street is not to be described, it must be seen; I have often seen it, and have often gazed on those venerable turrets, the remains of former days. I gazed on them when life was young in my bosom, as the moon beams which fell on their antique windows, and shed silver brightness on my youth's hopes; this very night the moon will shine in former brightness, but the youthful hopes, like those on whom they were founded, are for ever buried in time's thickest shade.

LETTER VI.

Mountford Bridge.

I TRAVEL by easy stages, and go slowly along the road, which often I flew rapidly over; but I have now more experience of life, and love to protract hope. On entering the coach at Oxford, I thought I should have to travel solitary forwards; but I was agreeably disappointed, for we took up three ladies at the outskirts of the town; however I had but for a short time the company of the fair triumvirate, as, on the authority of a learned writer of your sex, I shall call them; for they were put down at a bye road which led to the friend's house where they were going. They were thus far on their way to Manchester, and by their own account they would travel pleasantly, for they had acquaintances at short distances the entire road. This economical, as well as pleasant mode of travelling, was once common in Ireland, and I have practised it on more than one occasion myself; but we outgrow, as well as outlive, our acquaintances; and the times in Ireland have I fear of late been such as to ren-

der this kindly manner of journeying less general than it was.

Our coach had not rolled many paces when it stopped at a neat house, and a young lady stepped in; she was followed to the door by her mother, as from her solicitude I am sure she was; however there was little occasion for solicitude, for their parting was to be but for a day.

The young lady was lively and communicative; and a volume of Waverly which she held in her hand served as a good opening to discourse. The success of this novel has been extraordinary, but not, as a great northern critic represents, unprecedented. That of Cecilia, or the Mysteries of Udolpho, has been fully as great, if not greater; and Clarissa Harlowe, on its first appearance, and for years afterwards, excited an interest which might well indeed be called unprecedented.

The good humour and intelligence of my young companion, awakened, I will not say my eloquence, but my desire to please, and I cast a rapid glance over almost all the works of imagination I had read from my youth to the time I was speaking. I found her acquainted with many of them, and she was acquainted with one that I was not; she asked my opinion of Lady Morgan's France, which she had partially read, and whether I would recommend it to her further perusal: I could not,

for I have never read it myself. One book however I did recommend to her, and that was the Simple Story; and in like manner I recommend it to you. The letter written by Lady Elmwood on her death-bed, is pathetic almost to a fault, and excites a sensation of misery which, while it lasts, excludes even hope.

I slept at Birmingham, and left it the next day after breakfast. The coach was filled inside, and for a wonder, entirely with gentlemen. For this good society I was, I fancy, indebted to the rain, which poured in torrents. A decent looking man congratulated himself as he looked out, on his comfortable seat; though comfortable as it was, he had I suppose, some compunctious feeling of the expense; or he concluded by saying, "this is better than paying a doctor's bill." In England every thing has become a subject of calculation, even to health; and possibly this pearl of mighty price is often less valued for its own sake than as the means of exemption from expense.

A countrywoman, whom we had taken up for a short way the day before, had predicted this change,—she was sure, she said, we shall have rain, from the sighing of the wind in her cottage door. How a word denotes difference of condition and of comfort. A poor countrywoman of mine would have predicted the same, from the *sough* of the wind on her

hearth *stone; sough* is a harsh and guttural sound, of primitive language, common in Ireland; the wind is indeed *on* the hearth stone, and cottage is a word unknown.

About a mile from Shrewsbury is a magnificent monument erected to Lord Hill, which, like a huge Don Quixote, stands in the middle of the road, and forbids the traveller to pass until he hears what it says. The events of the present day are wonderful, but not in my apprehension calculated for lasting impression; and Shrewsbury, in all probability, will be known by the writings of Shakespeare, when the monument of Lord Hill shall have mouldered like himself. There is little to interest the imagination in the objects, and still less in the dress and arms of modern war; and neither poetry, painting, nor even statuary, can make them in any eminent degree graceful or picturesque.

The coach stopped at the Britannia Arms, but I was put down at the Lion: it is the great inn of Shrewsbury, and, what rarely happens, it is likewise the best. I went into the public-room, which was crowded with the passengers of the Holyhead Mail. To a delicate person their clamour might have been annoying, but the annoyance of a mail coach company can never be long; the horn sounds, and, like ghosts on the crowing of the cock, re-

freshments scarcely tasted, they must hie away.

The present company seemed not more impatient for refreshment than to get to the end of their journey, or to be set down snug in Dawson-street, as they termed it. "I want my trunk," said one; "but no, on second thoughts I will not mind it, nor change my cloathes till I get to Dawson-street." "What travelling Jews we seem," said a young man to his companion, "do you think we should have time to get a barber?" "Shave and welcome," replied the other, "if you think the innkeepers and coachmen have not done it close enough; but for my part I shan't shave till we get to Dawson-street." So much was this the burthen of the song that I looked to a large sleepy-headed-looking old man, expecting to hear him say, I shan't eat till we get to Dawson-street.

This species of nostalgia, or longing after home, will not be wondered at in the Irish, when, with the greater expense of an English inn, its measured scantiness is considered, and dilatory sparingness. In an Irish tavern, doubtless, there is in general greater coarseness of accommodation, and slovenliness of attendance; but there is plenty; and bread and vegetables, as well as meat and whisky, are always in abundance: whisky to the unaccustomed is not palatable, but it has cheapness, and it has strength. The traveller therefore habitu-

ated to such a sedative, finds in it that cordial feeling, which, after the lassitude of his journey, makes him satisfied with his situation and himself.

At an inn one soon gets acquaintances; I got two, and desired no more: one of them was a very young man, and he was thus far on his way to Wales for the recovery of his health, which seemed indeed very delicate. I required not to be told that he belonged to an elevated class of society, for every word and look denoted this. Seldom have I seen the difference between rank and riches more strongly exemplified, than in his manner, and that of a jolly Birmingham tradesman, who joined our little party awhile yesterday evening, and instantly recognised him to be the nephew of a gentleman of large fortune in his neighbourhood.

My other acquaintance was an elderly and seemingly religious man: with loquacious exultation he detailed the wanderings of a late traveller in Palestine, and regarded as confirmation strong of Holy Writ, that many of the places mentioned in Scripture are yet to be found. The very stone which Jacob, as he journeyed to Padan-aram, took for his hard pillow, and afterwards set up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of, is still it seems in existence, and is undoubted proof, in the good man's opinion, that he wrestled with an angel

there. I will not, on such a subject be ludicrous; but I could not help thinking of Annette, in the novel I awhile ago named, who proves to her mistress that a ghost stood at nights watching the great cannon on the east rampart, by pointing out the cannon itself.

To-day is Sunday, and I trust we spent the morning as it ought to be, for we all three went to church. We amused ourselves afterwards with the productions of those humble authors who write upon glass; to several the date was annexed, and some were of great antiquity: the writers doubtless write no more. Man's life is indeed a shadow, when the frail glass of the inn window is less frail and perishable than himself.

I left Shrewsbury after dinner. I took a civil leave of my elderly acquaintance, and something more than a civil of my youthful one; I parted with the young invalid with a feeling like regret, for he seemed to feel regret on parting with me.

I had walked nearly five miles when I reached this place. The shadows of evening were fast lengthening; and I sought, in the little ale-house, shelter for the night. My supper was good, and the ale, as I manage it, still better; I mix cyder with it, and whether it be my goodness, or its deserts, I fancy it, as old Boniface says, "worth eight shillings a quart."

To give it further relish, I keep writing to you, though at times I take a few moments to converse with a ruddy complexioned farmer, who sits smoaking at my side; and who might sit for the picture of a happy countryman, as we are apt to imagine him who tills the earth to be; though reflection, short reflection alas! tells us that happiness is a word merely of sound. He seems to regard me with astonishment, bordering, if I do not deceive myself, on admiration; I suppose from the circumstance of my talking and writing almost in a breath. Something of this sort you may remember is part of the panegyric of the mighty Cæsar himself.

My jolly companion is very anxious to hear my opinion of the weather, and in a particular manner, whether Wednesday next shall be a fine day. This is a subject of which I am not ashamed to confess my ignorance, nor need I, when I show it with the great Dr. Herschel himself; I heard him tell the following with great good humour and glee.

One morning a countryman knocked at his door, and requested the favour of a few words with him; he went out to the hall, when the countryman said to him, "I ask pardon, Doctor, for disturbing you; but I am quite in a quandary, as the saying is, and so I made free to call and ask your advice; you must know my meadows are a great deal too

long of cutting, but before I begin I should like to know whether you think the weather will soon take up?" "First look round you," said the Doctor, "and tell me what you see." "See," repeated the other, "why hay that is not worth the saving; what dunderhead owns it, that lives so near you, and cuts it without asking your advice?" "*I* own it," said the Doctor, "and had it cut the very day before the rain came on."

It was at Oxford I met this venerable man, and at this instant I have him almost as full in my view, with his benign countenance, and entire blue suit with black horn buttons, and old-fashioned full skirts. I have preserved some, I wish I had preserved more, of the manna which distilled from his tongue.

The magnitude of London was never, perhaps, more strongly exemplified than by a casual observation which he made. As a distinct body he has traced the London smoke as far as Reading; and when the wind is from the East, the atmosphere is so thick, that he can take no observation at his Observatory at Slough.

When the sky is clear, the moon is seen through his great telescope, exactly as it would appear to the naked eye at the distance of forty miles. This is wonderful, yet as so much has already been, who can forbear hoping that more may yet be done, and that this

beautiful planet may be brought nearer and nearer to us still; that in time its inhabitants, and their habitations, may become as well, or better known to us, than its mountains and valleys now are; and that we may be able to compare the guileless shadows with which fancy loves to people it, with the wretched non-ideal beings of the world in which we live; and, which groveiling superstition and calculating hypocrisy, combine to call the best.

I shall tell you one more of the good Doctor's stories, and then be done. It is now near ten, and at the village ale-house, ten is past midnight.

During the short peace of 1802 he visited Paris. Bonaparte, for his happiness, had he known it, was then neither an Emperor nor the son of one; neither a King nor the father of a race of kings; but the chief magistrate of a great and happy people.

An admirer as well as an encourager of talent, and of talent too so connected with his favourite studies, he one evening invited Dr. Herschell to take coffee with him. When the Doctor was introduced into his cabinet, he found him in company, I think it was with Garrat. This latter had the London paper called The Times in his hand, and read several paragraphs aloud. They were animadversions on the chief Consul's character and conduct, delivered with the peculiar courtesy for which

this paper is so remarkable. Occasionally the Minister interrupted his reading to comment, and appealed to the Doctor whether the English Government could be thought sincerely desirous to preserve peace, when they permitted the French nation and its chief magistrate, to be treated in a manner so opprobrious and offensive. Bonaparte hearkened at first with indifference, and at last with impatience. He frequently took snuff, and frequently took out his box without snuffing. The instant, consistently with politeness that he could, he turned the conversation to subjects more congenial with his learned friend's studies and pursuits, and during a conversation of two hours, displayed a knowledge of the higher and more abstruse branches of mathematics, which in so young a man, the Doctor declared would have astonished him, had his studies been confined to these subjects alone.

Happy for him that he has studied them! Happy that in the remote and desert land where his hard fortune has consigned him, he can, by the exercise of his mighty mind, escape at times from it; that while the malice or the fears of his enemies hold in durance his captive body, he can in thought wander through regions of boundless space, and in the distant and the future, gain transient oblivion of the present and the nigh.

LETTER VII.

Bangor Ferry.

I LEFT my village ale-house betimes in the morning, but had not walked many paces, when I was overtaken by the Hollyhead heavy coach; heavily indeed it was laden, and I know not how I came to alter my intention, and load it still more. However as there was no room inside, I mounted on the top, on which, beside men, women, and children, that set all acts of parliament at defiance, there was a pyramid of boxes, packages, and trunks. Several of the women were of respectable appearance, and though they actually screamed as the heavy-laden machine rolled to and fro, yet in the course of a few miles driving, they contrived one and all to tell me, that they loved the out side of all things, and that riding inside made them sick.

We were at breakfast in Oswestry, when I felt myself suddenly taken ill, and instead of going on with the coach, I was obliged to go to bed. However there is no occasion to be uneasy, for in the evening I got up perfectly recovered. I did not want for amusement,

for it was a fair or market day, and the room in which I dined, looked on the street. There was fighting as at an Irish fair, but there was no sport; or at least so the waiter, who seemed a connoisseur, said. "Hang them Welsh devils," said he, "they have no hands." I thought they had hands, and hard hands too, but I suppose they did not use them according to rule; and very likely, as Monsieur Jourdain complained of his maid Nicole, they pushed in tierce, before pushing in quarte; and I am sure they had not the patience to parry.

The waiter had reason for his contempt of the Welsh, for on enquiry I found that he was born full ten miles from the borders. Of border pride I had soon further specimen, for a club of the inhabitants assembled in the room where I sat, and I heard many stories of the turbulency and drunkenness, and what I should less have suspected, the knavery and cunning of the Welsh visitants of this English town, as it was ostentatiously called. By a slight effort of the imagination, I might have fancied myself in a society of Irish Orangemen. But I check myself, it must have been more than a slight effort. The Orangemen would tread down their unfortunate countrymen, while these proud Salopians only wanted to raise themselves.

Were I to judge by them of the general sentiments of the people thereabouts, I should

not suppose that revolutionary opinions have made much progress, or that their politics were less stationary than their prejudices. I question whether Mr. Cobbett or Mr. Hunt would have been as civilly treated as I was. It is true that, different from this latter great man, I listened, and every where I believe, he who listens is thought better of than he who talks.

Oswestry, no doubt, from its seclusion, was for several years a prison of honour for the French officers; and so certain, though sometimes so slow are the effects of civility and politeness, they appear still to be kindly remembered. The heart-longing with which these poor people looked forward to release from their wearisome captivity, the heart of a captive alone can, perhaps, fully conceive. "But who knows what is good for him in this life, all the days of his vain life which he passes as a shadow?" The hour of deliverance, so ardently wished for, came at length, and the worst moment of their long confinement, was probably happiness in comparison. When the disastrous intelligence of the events which led to it, was first communicated, a few hearkened with contemptuous incredulity; but the greater number heard it with anguish, which their attempt to conceal, only made the more remarkable; and several in the simple and

expressive language of Scripture, "Lifted up their voices and wept aloud."

That these poor captives looked to a very different gaol delivery, I myself can bear testimony; for in passing through this town a few years ago, I spent an evening in company with several of them. Sad was the tale they had in general to tell. "My heart," exclaimed one fine looking young man, "has so suffered, that it is I fear for ever closed against the miseries of my fellow man." But hope lives even in the chill bosom of despair, and they still cling to Buonaparte as their avenger and deliverer. This was in that memorable year when the hero's glory blazed the brightest, and when it faded away.

"The Power which gives, resumes, and orders all,
"It urg'd him on, and urg'd him on to fall."

He entered Moscow, and his good genius took leave of him. The wind of heaven was let loose, the snow descended, and, like the snow-drop, the mightiest army which the world ever saw, vanished from the earth. The enchained Prometheus of uncontrollable destiny, in the soothing reflection that it was fate, not man, which fixed him to his barren rock, has, if I am rightly informed, moments of relief from the gnawing vulture of his soul.

I left Oswestry the next morning, but as I was still a little weak, it was evening before I

reached Langollen. I had two inns to choose from, and I fear I chose the worst: however, there was a splendid harp in the hall, and the harper played most indefatigably. The landlady's niece was the Hebe of my homely dinner: she was a fashionable looking young woman, but had an unvarying sullenness of manner, which nothing could soften, and which I suppose was intended to show that she was not an ordinary waiter.

I asked her for the loan of a book, and she sent me in the Christian's Magazine. I doubt whether Methodism has made the people of England more moral, but it certainly has made them more decent. In Ireland, the catholic religion, whatever may be the reason, has not had the latter effect: there is there, perhaps, the appearance of greater vice than there actually is, while in England there is the appearance of less; and smoothness of manners shadows the corruption which it cannot conceal.

Before leaving Langollen, I bethought me of the fair recluses of the vale, of whom so much has been said, and, for aught I know, sung. — I walked slowly once or twice across their grounds, which are neat though small, and almost over-hang the town. To the cottage I was denied admittance, I believe by no less august a person than Lady Eleanor Butler herself. As I approached the door, I saw two

figures pass over to some workmen: they wore great coats and black hats, so that at first I could not tell whether they were women or men. They were old women, and they were plain women likewise; I regret to say it, very plain. I addressed myself to her who stood the nearest to me, and requested permission to see the house and garden. The house was never shown to strangers, she coldly, and even gruffly replied, and the gardener was out of the way. I made no further attempt at conversation, but took my leave.

As I walked onwards I had subject for reflection, and sorrowful reflection too. The venerable Orestes and Pylades, with their slouched hats and heavy great coats, were still present to me, and I was long before I could be done thinking of them. How should the young beware of romance, and be contented to live as their fathers and mothers did before; for wisdom is the ornament of grey hairs, and the grace of youth is oftentimes the unseemliness of old age. How deserving of reprehension too are those writers, who, in their mawkish sensibility, exaggerate what perhaps they never beheld, and aggravate the lion's roar, until it is as gentle as any sucking lamb.

The vale of Langollen deserves all the praise that has been bestowed upon it. The day was a gloomy one, and the headlong tor-

rent, as it poured in foam from the steep rock, had fuller effect from the clouded mountain and murky sky.

It had long threatened rain, and when I was within a few miles of Corwen, it came down in torrents. I had an umbrella, but I sought beneath some lofty trees a more umbrageous one. I had not stood long when I was joined by a gentleman of rather a singular appearance; he was clad in a cotton jacket, and wore a yellow straw hat over a face that was scarcely less yellow; and he had a little mat with a few changes of linen, which he carried on the point of a stick over his shoulder. Having nothing particular to do, he had left London on a *little* tour as he called it; though, as he had walked all the way, and meant further to walk home by the way of Edinburgh, it seems deserving of a more honourable appellation.

When the rain was over we walked on to Corwen, where we had good accommodation, and society made it seem better.

Good company makes lightsome the road, and early the next evening we reached Capel Curig. My companion and I parted here, for almost without stopping he proceeded on to Snowdon. He was an intelligent young man, and he ought to be, if intelligence runs in families, for he is a nephew of the celebrated Thomas Payne. He was not long returned

from America, where he had been to attend his dying uncle. This great man, it appears, was shamefully deserted during his last illness, by the people whom in vigour of health he had so greatly served. The people, said Plato, is an inconstant and ungrateful animal; and, were he now living, I dare say he would still say the same, or worse.

The young man assured me that his uncle had not, at his last moments, those terrible apprehensions of a future state which were attributed to him; but he had great apprehensions of death, for he had long been in a state of great bodily weakness; and bodily weakness, as much as conscience, makes cowards of us all. Courage depends less on reason than on the stomach and the blood, and a cup of green tea taken late in the evening, makes the hero of the morning the frightened dreamer of the night.

I intended stopping at Capel Curig, but was tempted by the opportunity of a return chaise, to come on to Bangor.

Yesterday was a day of rest, and I went to church. The music was but indifferent, but I heard a sermon very well delivered by a son, or son-in-law, of the Bishop. His text was taken from the book of Genesis, and as nearly as I recollect, these were the words, "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place! this is

none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." The drift of the discourse was to show, that particular spots are to be regarded as holy, by the express command of the Almighty himself; and that as a cathedral, in an especial manner, is holy, a careless demeanour there, in an especial manner is unseemly. We are never the worse for good advice, but to do the congregation of Bangor justice, they seemed on this occasion not to need it.

The evening was worse spent than the morning; for as I was sitting quietly reading, I was broken in upon by a couple of wild young men who lodged in the inn. One of them was a countryman of my own; the other was a Scotchman, and what perhaps would not be expected, he was the most noisy and obstreperous. They were officers on half-pay, and had come to Bangor, they told me, for economy; though if their manner of living last night be called by that name, I know not what to regard as extravagance.

I am to-day in better company. I was joined at breakfast by a gentleman whom I had remarked yesterday in the cathedral for his air of devotion, and from whom, for one, the arrows which the preacher shot against unseemly behaviour in church, I am sure, fell bluntless. He is a preacher himself, and is re-

turning to Ireland where he has a parish. He had been in London at a great meeting of the Bible and Missionary Society, and several were there, he tells me, from much greater distances.

We walked awhile about Bangor, and then walked on to this place. The way is not long, but had it been longer, we could have employed ourselves in profitable discourse; for my companion's whole soul was filled with the divine meeting, as he termed it, which he had been attending, and with the great work which is so happily begun. Good man! he looks forward, in confidence of hope, to the period as not remote, when every man, in every clime, shall have a copy of the Bible in his own tongue; and the earth, to speak in his own language, "be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." I hope that these new converts will do more credit to Christianity, than certain professors of our acquaintance, who, though they have, as Sancho says, four fingers of old Christian fat on their ribs, live as if they were very Pagans.

The inn here is a favourite one of mine, for it is one of those few houses now remaining which give one the idea of home. We shall leave it betimes to-morrow, and by this time to-morrow night, if the wind holds as it

is, we shall be in Dublin, or at least in Dublin bay. What a brief sea voyage in comparison of your long and wearisome one; yet a few years hence, when you look back upon it, it will seem to have rode on the dial's point as well as mine.

LETTER VIII.

Dublin.

It has been my fortune to cross the channel several times, and I have crossed it now, I could almost hope, for the last time. Midsummer as it is, it blew a downright hurricane; for such is my luck that I scarcely ever go to sea, that a storm does not arise as if it were on purpose. A wandering Eneas, I am not, I have long seen, but a favourite of destiny.

The wind at first was fair, and as Satan is said to do with his votaries, tempted us into the deep, and then turned its back upon us. We tacked I dare say a hundred times, and during a space of thirty hours, our little vessel was tossed about in ceaseless agitation; never do I remember to have witnessed so much sickness, and the sight was enough for ever to give one a distaste for the sea.

In beating into the bay, we had the misfortune to lose our bowsprit, and nearly for twenty minutes the sea was going clean over the deck; it was disputed by the ancients, whether people on board ship, were to be reckoned among the living or the dead, and

for a few moments I assure you, I almost reckoned myself among the latter; an inexpressible sensation of horror was in the thought, and discontent, sickness, and every feeling of the soul, vanished before the instinctive horror of nature, at a sudden and violent death.

The danger, however, was not so great as I apprehended, the wreck was at length cleared away, and, by unwearied exertions, we got up to the Pigeon-house, and were landed between one and, two in the morning; coaches were in attendance, which in no long time put us down at the hotel in Dawson-street; where I threw myself into bed exhausted by the sickness which returned to my stomach, the instant that fear had left my heart.

Nor did it leave me when I awoke, and in vain I attempted to take some breakfast — tea is recommended in sickness and sorrow, I can recommend it in neither, for the heaving stomach and choaking throat resist it alike.

My friend the clergyman eat three eggs and a proportionable quantity of bread and butter; "You may as well eat," said he, "for we shall be charged three shillings each, whether we eat little, or eat much." "Were I to be charged ten shillings" I replied, "I can eat nothing; how happy you are to have escaped sea-sickness so well." "Say, rather," replied he, "how happy to have escaped the danger of the sea so well." "I do say so from the bottom of my soul," said I, "but

confess honestly, did you not, when the vessel leaned so much down, regret that in your zeal for the conversion of the heathen, you had quitted your peaceful native fields." "I did not regret it," said he, "though I confess "I wished to be on shore." "And I too," I replied, "and I would readily at that instant, have given a thousand furlongs of sea, for an acre of barren ground, long heath or any thing; my only hope was, that I was in a Hollyhead packet." "I had, I trust, better hope" said he, "for I had hope in him who is on the sea, as well as the shore, and has said how far it shall go, and where its proud waves shall stop."

After dinner I walked about the town: that it is a beautiful one has been so often said, that I need not say it again. It is improved even since I saw it last, for the quays, as had long been wished, are opened and embanked almost their entire length; they make a superb walk, but it is to be regretted that the side next the river is not bordered with trees.

The new Post Office is a noble building of the Ionic order, and cost, it is said, upwards of seventy thousand pounds; it is supported in front by six light and elegant fluted columns, in the centre of the entablature of which are placed the royal arms of England, and the whole is surmounted with three finely executed statues of Hibernia, with Mercury on the one side, and Fidelity on the other. Sackville-street, in

which it stands, is a broad and commodious one, and the coaches draw up and drive away without confusion. I stopped a few moments to look at them; in equippment and external appearance they differ little from the London coaches, but in the tone and accent of the coachmen and guards, there is still a great difference.

I went afterwards into the new gardens as they are called, though they are now beginning to be old ones; but this mode of speaking is common in Ireland. A gentleman of my native town is called in age, as he was in youth, young James H———; ah! with the name could we have our youth again, for well may its death be deemed the essence of our natural one.

These gardens belong to the Lying-in-hospital; the price of admittance is five-pence, and the profit goes to the benefit of the institution; at the close of the season it must be considerable, for forty-five, and even fifty pounds are sometimes taken of a night; the expence to the hospital is trifling, a few lamps are lighted among the trees, and two military bands attend; it is a very pigmy Vauxhall therefore, but it has these two great advantages, that the gardens are in the centre of the town, and that the amusements are over at an early hour.

It was Saturday evening, yet there was a numerous, and by no means an inelegant com-

pany; they generally walked on a terrace at the end of the garden, the farthest from the Hospital, and the light spire, indistinctly seen through the trees, had a pleasing effect; the music was far from being bad, and the tunes were those, which at present are so generally played. By way eminence, the overture to Guy Mannering was played twice, and I could have heard it a third time, for it is a composition of great beauty, and does credit to the ingenious composer. We had likewise the overture to Rob Roy, which truth to say, is an inanimate and unconnected mass; a mere composition of shreds and patches, with Roy's wife in the middle, like the centre piece of a country quilt. God save the King, and Patrick's Day are the Castor and Pollux of the gardens, and always end the performance; this is a remnant of the rebellion, for it is the same at the theatre, and every other place of amusement. God save the King is a draught which must be swallowed, and Patrick's day is the sweetener to it.

The next morning I arose at six, for I had promised a friend to accompany him to the house of an acquaintance, a few miles from town; we went on a jaunting car as far as the Black Rock; there were two decent looking women on the opposite side of the car, but oddly dressed in short bedgowns; this was long a fashionable morning dress in Dublin, but a

wretched woman was hanged in it, and the fashion passed away.

From the Rock we walked to our friend's house, and arrived in time to partake of his substantial breakfast; there was a whole dish of eggs on the table, the sight of which made me a little qualmish, for I had still some sickness remaining.

Those who visit the country must walk, though perhaps they have walked to fatigue before; the landscape in itself was uninteresting, but the day was fine, and the bare hills and barren heath became beautiful, touched with the Promethean heat of the summer sun. Our party was more numerous than select, for men, women, and children, had come down to pass the day with their country cousins. Two of these were natives of London, and this was their first visit to the land of their fathers; they visited likewise their graves, for our road accidentally led to the burial ground where they lay. It is a lonely spot, on a dreary heath, far distant from any habitation; the church is in ruins, and its roofless walls, overgrown with nettles, gave further desolation to the scene. The females pondered gravely over the indistinct epitaphs, the winged hour glasses, and ghastly deaths' heads, rudely carved on the blistered and moss grown tomb-stones; while the young men, as if to show that they valued neither death nor deaths' heads, made

themselves merry with these sad and dismal memorials of mortality. Miserable subject of merriment!—What rational being can contemplate the dead in their last lonely habitations, or gaze on their massy tomb-stones, or count the sands of these fanciful hour glasses, without a feeling, melancholy as it is profound? In the midst of life we are in death, and the stone which to-day we heedlessly walk over, may, before a week, be laid over us; but these are mournful reflections, and unavailing reflections too, we may shrink from the grissly tyrant, but we cannot fly from him even for an hour.

After tea we took leave of our hospitable entertainer; there were two jaunting cars, and I took my seat on the one which was occupied by the two Londoners. How association attaches us to places, and even to those who have dwelt in them! We talked of the Minories and Tower, until in imagination we were borne thither, and, in the muddy ditch and stagnant water, forgot the blue wave and azure sky of our present scene; we shut our eyes to the crowd of people in jaunting cars, singles, and coaches, that every moment passed us; but we could not altogether shut our ears, for the merriment of these good people was not a little noisy, and in passing they had all something to say.

A jaunting car is a commodious conveyance,

ıd if you picture to yourself the cabriolet of French coach, harnessed to a single horse, ou will have a tolerable idea of it. For this lustration I am indebted to my pleasant little cquaintance of the Birmingham coach ; and ın my expressing some surprise that she should ıe so well acquainted with jaunting cars, she old me that they are now not uncommon in ıer part of England.

We have given the English jaunting cars o ride in, as before we had given them eggs o their breakfast, and potatoes to their meat, and had they left us meat to our potatoes, it would have been but fair. In candour, however, it must be admitted, that spite of war and taxation the middle classes still have it in abundance, and are no more Pythagoreans in their food than in their drink. I asked one of the young men how he liked Ireland: famously he replied, " what with beefsteaks in the morning, and ducks and green peas at night, I never lived so well in my life."

But these young men seemed not fastidious with regard to country; the other is just returned from France delighted with the place, and above all delighted with the ladies. A lady does not sketch ladies *con amore* like a young man, and you cannot fail to remember your letter from Bourdeaux of the year before last, wherein you undervalued them even to their shoe-strings. Was this prejudice, or, in

compliance with the fashion of the day, the affectation of it? Or was your exclamation, that you had seen an English dairy, a genuine burst of nationality, or, excuse me, a counterfeited one. Whichever it was, again excuse me, it was wrong. Affectation may now seem prettiness, but when youth and beauty are flown, and they will soon be flown, how different will it seem? Beware, therefore, of it even in the most trifling things, and beware of national prejudice too; what mischief has it not wrought in all days, and in an especial manner in those latter ones, how has it armed two great nations against each other, and plunged both into misery, the triumphant into the greatest misery, and who shall say that it is not deserved, or that a malignant wish to destroy rival happiness, is not justly punished by the loss of our own?

" A curse in our rage on her children was thrown,
And now wretched people, that curse strikes our own."

LETTER IX.

Dublin.

I DINED yesterday in a large, and rather an extraordinary party, for we were twenty-seven in number, all men, and all medical men; one of them was a fellow-student of my own, and I had not seen him since we quitted college; he instantly recognised me, though I did not so soon recognise him; and when at length I did, I beheld as in a too faithful mirror, the changes which time had wrought on myself. If it be a pleasure it is a melancholy one, to meet thus an old acquaintance, preserving something of the form of youthful recollection, but kneaded and moulded by the slow-moving hand of time.

My friend practised for a short time in this city, and by his skill saved the life of an old gentleman, or, what was just as well, the old gentlemen thought that he had. At his decease he bequeathed his doctor, the whole, or the greater part of his property, who like myself, is now an honorary disciple of Æsculapius only.

We had an abundant dinner, and you will

suppose that twenty-seven Irishmen would require abundance of wine; there was abundance certainly, but there was no excess, and I believe this is now as rare at a genteel Dublin table, as at a genteel London one. Besides we were all, as I have said, medical men, and did not choose, as some ungracious pastors do, to preach against excess, and reck not our own reed.

That our talk was of medicine you will not wonder, and little perhaps as it is worth your attention, I shall relate a part of it.

" The annals of mortality are melancholy, and so likewise are those of birth; out of every eleven children born in Dublin, one is still born, and of these scarce the half reach to maturity; such is the hard condition of the poor, or so little is nature heedful of life; we would hope that at the consummation of all things she shall be found to have been a kind and tender mother; but to those who look not beyond the present scene, she appears rather to resemble those unfeeling parents, who abandon their infants the instant they are born; and satisfied with having begotten them, expose them helpless to all the vicissitudes of fortune.

" A young lady, in the neighbourhood of Carlow, has lived six months without nourishment, unless the wetting her mouth once, or at the most twice a day, with a tea-spoon-

ful of whey be so called. Even the sight of food is loathsome to her, and she is become frightfully lean; she never leaves her bed, but she reads and works there, and has a tolerable flow of spirits; occasionally she is wrapt up in a sheet imbued with spirits and milk; but she takes an opiate regularly, and to this I would attribute the prolongation of her life; food is necessary to repair the waste of the frame; but this waste is slow in its progress, while hunger is a sensation which is always recurring, and is destroyed by opium and other narcotics, as well as by food. The fiction therefore of the philosopher in the Persian Tales, who took a long journey with no other provision, than pills made of this powerful drug, is by no means an extravagant one; on the contrary, I should recommend a similar one to every person who, like Aboulfouaris in the same tales, is a great voyager. Of the casualties of the sea, loss or want of food is among the most deplorable, and if opium did not save life, it would at all events lessen suffering and soften death.

" The fever, I am concerned to learn, is again very much on the increase; that it should increase, nobody need wonder, for the poverty of the lower classes is very great, and their wretchedness is greater still; the sight of this it is impossible to escape from, for though the beggars are less numerous, and less cla-

morous too than formerly, the assembled groups of idle and gossipping men and women in every street, and at every street corner, are as frequent as ever. The appearance of these wretched beings is more wretched than poverty even will warrant.

"No doubt the wretchedness of a great city strikes us more forcibly, by its contrast with magnificence and splendour; but the wretchedness of Dublin, I am sorry to say, is more squalid and offensive, than that of any town or village, I ever visited in any part of Ireland; yet Dublin is the seat of government, and, what is better, of charity and undoubted benevolence. It is the seat too of patriotism as it calls itself, of ostentatious nationality, which parades at dinners with real or affected prejudices, and boasts of them as if they were wise.

"Vain and foolish boasts! Prejudices injurious as they are absurd; let those who talk thus, look round them and be ashamed; let them consider the condition of their poor, of their persons, their habiliments, and their habitations, and if they can amend them, they will then have some reason to be proud. Those who could introduce among the poor here, a taste for cleanliness, would not be more their benefactors, than of the city at large; and a society for the promotion of cleanliness, would at the same time be one

for the suppression of disease and vice; it would doubtless have inveterate habits to contend with, but perseverance would at length overcome them. Laziness and indulgence are alike natural to man, and no more is he naturally cleanly, than he is naturally good; reason teaches us, though slowly, their value, and custom confirms what it has begun; we would then no more wallow in the slothful stye of dirtiness than of sin, for cleanliness, like virtue, is its own reward."

The link which binds conversation is so fine, as to be at times scarcely discernible. By some transition or other we came to talk of a young lady, who is I understand at present a pretty general subject of discourse; her name would give you no information, but she belongs to a most respectable family, and one not more distinguished for benevolence, than attachment to the established church; you may conceive, therefore, how painful were her friends' feelings, when they learned that the young enthusiast, had renounced the Protestant, and made public profession of the Catholic faith.

That a young woman should be captivated with the charms of the Roman Catholic religion is no way surprising, for in external appearance it is beyond all others imposing; its mysteries too, exercise in a special manner that sublime faith, which all sects concur in

placing so far above mere carnal morality. We have a few mysteries ourselves in our respective churches, but not only does the lion's portion, as of right, belong to the old church, but they are likewise more exalted in their kind; ours might have satisfied the fair convert's heart, or imagination even, but the doctrine of the real presence could alone fill her whole soul.

Of all the triumphs of superstition, this is the greatest, and, therefore, in the opinion of many, the most meritorious. Henry the Eighth, after he had broken off all connection with the Pope, rested for salvation on it; and had her temper equally exposed her heart, it is probable that Queen Elizabeth did the same.

We wonder at what is distant, and overlook what is at hand; it was remarked, that in Egypt it was easier to find a god than a man; and during ages, it was in every country in Europe almost the same.

LETTER X.

Dublin.

The weather, I dare say, is nearly as hot here as it is with you, and in addition we have the bustle of an election, a fever which you are free from. Sailors do not choose their own legislators, and I do not know that your navigation will be the less safe on that account; safer than I wish it, it cannot be: smooth be the sea over which you are gliding, and in its pure bosom may you see the reflection, as far as humanity will admit of, of your life's future swelling stream.

This morning the college, with all due formality, proceeded to elect their representative. I was curious to witness the manner in which this venerable body would exercise its functions, and the moment I had taken my breakfast I went there. There was a great crowd, and I took my stand among them, waiting the opening of the door. Not long had I to wait, for almost instantly it was forced open, and I was borne forwards at greater risk than I trust I shall ever again run on a similar occasion.

A hall of election is not the Temple of Concord, and there was all the uproar and confusion incident to such a scene. The two candidates at length made their appearance — Mr. Plunkett was welcomed by loud and continued huzzaing, while Mr. Croker was greeted with groans and hisses, which he seemed to bear like one accustomed to these things. He was accompanied by the Provost and the greater number of the Fellows. They were preceded by beadles who cleared away the crowd, while Mr. Plunkett was allowed to clear the way for himself, and was attended by a much less numerous *cortege*.

The noise was so great that I could scarcely be said to hear either of their speeches, and the eloquence of the one was as effectually drowned by applause, as that of the other was by hooting. Mr. Croker made some slight allusion to counsellor Philips, of whom you have probably heard. The counsellor was on the spot ready for action, and apparently not sorry to have this opportunity to speak.

He is a good-looking young man. He is reckoned a man of genius, and I believe is really so. One of its attributes he certainly has, which is irritability, and like the porcupine, he shoots his fretful quills on all who venture to assail him. At times, it must be owned, he has been unfairly assailed; still, if he makes proper use of them, these assailings

will do him good. Genius is an inheritance, but judgment comes by time, and it comes by admonition too.

It would be too much to say to this ingenious orator, as Phocion of old said to an Athenian one, "Young man your speeches are like cypress-trees, large and lofty, but without fruit;" but it must be admitted, that, like May-day garlands, they seem rather made for ornament than use. This is a fault for which nothing can compensate; for the bar, no more than the senate, is a mere theatre for the display of talent, and gratification of vanity. It is a scene of real life, on which objects of serious consequence are to be treated, and he who, misled by too eager a desire of applause, tricks them out with the gay and dazzling colours of the imagination, is sure to miss the fame which he seeks.

Though the voters were so few, the polling was tedious, for in general the fellows, junior as well as senior, gave their reasons with their votes. One of the latter spoke with great violence of Mr. Croker's general conduct in parliament, and particularly reprobated his conduct in the affair of the Duke of York. The orator kindled with the subject, and was proceeding with still greater vehemence, when he was pulled down by some of his brethren, who dreaded that his warmth might lead him into expressions which Mr. Croker could not

bear. The warmth of the hall *I* could bear no longer, and, though with great difficulty, I made my way out.

I cooled myself in the college park. The walks are extensive, and bordered on each side with rows of venerable old trees. Beneath these academic shades the eccentric Dr. Barrett at times used to walk, but the crowds which curiosity attracted became at length so offensive, that he now never leaves his chamber, except when he crosses over to commons or prayers. Like his great prototype, Magliabechi, his whole time is devoted to reading, and, like him too, he often bears the dust and cobwebs of his folios on his cloaths. He is said to be a worthy and innocent man; but this need not be said — a passion for reading cannot exist with a disposition to vice.

I sauntered about the college the greater part of the day. It is a fine old building, and is divided into two nearly equal squares. The principal front is of the Corinthian order, and is ornamented with pilastres and festoons.

About seven in the evening, loud shouting announced the success of the popular candidate. The chairing I did not see, for at that hour it was time to think of dinner. However I might as well have staid, for the gentleman with whom I was engaged waited himself to witness the ceremony, and to hear Mr. Plunkett's concluding speech. It was

short, but so much admired, that I should not wonder if we had more of Plunkett's, as of Baxter's last words.

Mr. Plunkett is a man of wit as well as of eloquence, and my host related some of his witticisms on the subject of the present contest. Calling a few mornings ago on a young man to solicit his vote, he sat down in the window. The young man pressed him to take another seat. I do not want another *seat*, said he, I only want to retain my present one. My good friend, said he to a gentleman of the name of Rea, I must, for your own sake, have your vote, for if you refuse, you will be certainly taken for a Castle Rea. As a motive to greater exertion, he was told how indefatigable Mr. Croker was, and that he even slept in the college. Yes, replied the wit, I understand that he *lies* there.

Mr. Plunkett, I believe, has in general given satisfaction to his constituents, yet, on the present occasion he was very near losing his election. The provost is said to be personally his enemy, and to have assisted his rival with all his interest. Besides, colleges, as well as individuals, have favours to seek, and are naturally disposed to bask in the sunshine of court favour. Dublin college just now seeks a very particular favour, if it be true, as a great writer has remarked, that

celibacy has no pleasures. By one of the original statutes, the fellows are forbidden to marry. During many years this statute was let sleep, but it has of late been drawn from the sepulchre wherein it was quietly inurned, and is now rigorously enforced.

The fellows, I know not on what grounds, are led to suppose that Mr. Croker has influence enough to have it set aside; but were he much higher in administration than he is, I should doubt his being able to effect this. We are just now governed fully as much by precedent as by reason, and our rulers, with magnanimity at least equal to their wisdom, to oppose modern innovation, seem to have taken their stand on the decaying battlements of ancient days. But, however this may be, the junior fellows almost all gave Mr. Croker their votes, as they naturally desire to get rid of this barbarous and monkish law; the seniors, as may be supposed, are more indifferent, and to them celibacy and marriage are alike.

It is singular that in ancient times it was the reverse. When, by the selfish policy of Rome, celibacy was first enforced on the clergy, it was readily acquiesced in by the younger clergymen, while it was vigorously opposed by the elder ones.

Dublin college, though it is the fashion to

decry it, has produced a number of great men, and the names of Swift, Burke, and Goldsmith are familiar to all.

A deceased authoress, in one of her letters to Mr. Walter Scott, while she admits the claim of Ireland to eloquence, denies it all claim to poetry, and Mr. Scott, if I remember right, acquiesces in the opinion. To say nothing of a living poet, did they mean to deny the claims of Goldsmith to this name, or could they by any effort of vanity have supposed, that their quaint and harsh sonnets, or halting and irregular ballads, will go down to posterity with the Traveller and Deserted Village?

The talents of Burke deserve all the approbation which has been bestowed on them. A little to alter the language of Petrarch, he had genius that would have raised him to heaven, if prejudice and passion had not tied him to the earth. What heart of humanity can compare this harvest of sorrow with the seed time of joy of the French revolution, and not detest the man who, as Satan gazed on Paradise, viewed askance the fair prospect, and, prophet of evil, in a great measure wrought the fulfillment of his own prediction?

The present provost is a man after Burke's own heart, and has, I believe, excluded Locke from the course of college reading. He is said to be a man of great learning, and

when a student was rewarded with the praise of *Optime*, or, very well. Whatever be its merits, he only shares this praise with one other person, for during two hundred years there have been but two of these *Optimes*. But, after all, what signifies it merely to be learned? We become so by the reflections of others, but we become wise only by our own.

Of the wisdom or eloquence of the worthy Provost, I had this day no opportunity of judging, for the moment he rose to speak, the outcry rose along with him. Dr. Barrett was received with a good humoured mixture of merriment and approbation, and Dr. Magee with unbounded applause. He is the author of a work on the Atonement, which is said to be a production of merit, very argumentative, and I believe very vituperative. A young collegian told me with great glee, that he proves Dr. Priestley to have been a mere ignoramus, and totally unacquainted with Greek. Totally unacquainted with Greek he could not have been, but it is likely enough that he has, through inadvertence, left himself open in many places to an antagonist. Unquestionably he was a man of great talents, but he grasped at too much. His chemistry would not coalesce kindly with his metaphysics, and it is possible his philosophy would unite as indifferently with his theology. He was a

philosophical Sisyphus, on whom, when his argument had nearly reached the object, it always rolled back again.

From all I have heard of Mr. Croker, he is a man of some abilities. He is now a kind of minor Mæcenas among the poets, and in his youth he was a poet himself. He is said to be the author of Epistles in Verse, on the state of the Irish stage, which some years ago were received in Dublin with great approbation. They are written in the Hudibrastic measure, and display considerable humour. Little connexion as politics have with the stage, he has *judiciously* contrived to associate them together, and had he chosen the church for his profession, by this time I dare say he would have been a bishop. In his notes there is a college-display of learning, which is as amusing as any part of the work. They are all over glittering with Greek, and as far as the Dublin performers, or Public are concerned, they might as well have related to the expedition of the Argonauts.

In the hall of election there is a full length portrait of Queen Elizabeth, which resembles others that I have seen of this extraordinary woman. She was the great benefactress of the university, and bestowed on it houses and lands, which have made it one of the richest colleges in Europe. Directly opposite the Provost's chair, is a valuable bequest of hers;

no less than an organ taken on board the Spanish armada. As might be concluded, it is a clumsy and inelegant instrument; the ornaments, if it ever had any, are defaced, and the soul of music long has fled. Still it is a precious relic of other days. Could the wand of an inchanter, for an instant, give us back the antique groups who, amidst the waste of waters, then hearkened to it with reverence; what a contrast would they form to the tumultuous crowd who this day bustled round it, and whose noisy sounds, like its own sweet notes, will soon be hushed into rest?

The hand of death just now could alone have hushed them. We have read of the wonders wrought by music of old, and how the harps of Orpheus, and Amphion, and Orion, civilized all nature. Apollo would tune his harp in vain, amidst the humours of a contested election.

LETTER XI.

Coolehill.

I LEFT Dublin yesterday morning by the coach to this place. The fare is a guinea, and as the distance is better than sixty miles, it cannot be regarded as unreasonable. We had a young and pretty married lady inside, while her husband, like a faithless guardian, was mounted on the top. In France, men neglect their wives because it is thought genteel, and in Ireland, because it is thought manly. In any country, how few can live as they choose; and of how little consequence after all is this, for how few would choose to live as they ought?

Our road lay through the Phœnix Park. The morning was fine, and the drive amidst green lawns and lofty trees was beautiful. We passed the Lodge, as the Lord Lieutenant's residence is called. I enquired after his character, but no one seemed to know any thing of him, and one gentleman actually did not know his name. How is the mighty fallen! and how little less perishable are man's honours than his frail self! The title of Lord Lieutenant remains, but all which gave it

lustre is for ever gone. Knighthood, which was coveted by the greatest, is now almost a subject of mirth; and the consul who waved his wand, and traced the circle, beyond which kings dare not venture, is become a mere exciseman, to take the gauge of merchandize, and measurement of trade.

In the centre of the Park is a beautiful figure of the imagined bird whose name it bears. From some such fanciful association I suppose it is, that the monument to the Duke of Wellington is erecting there. He is the phœnix of modern generals, for in this world desert is always reckoned by success. Yet into his success how much of fortune has entered! and I may say this without offence, for in all ages she has been worshipped as a goddess; and the Romans who were the most military people in the universe, erected numerous temples to her. It is death alone which places us beyond the reach of her caprices, and I could therefore almost wish that the Duke of Wellington had fallen on the plains of Waterloo. When the sun streamed in setting lustre on the mighty victory, like it the hero should have set in golden majesty; for nothing could he look for beyond this. "Die," said a Spartan to one, who with his sons had conquered at the Olympic games, "die now, for you cannot be a god."

We breakfasted at a lone house, and got a

most comfortable one. We likewise got the use of our tongues, which before we seemed to have lost. Fasting produces silence, and with many it produces peevishness, which is worse. I have read of a man who was the torment of every one around him, from the time he left his bed until he sat down to breakfast; after which cheerfulness sparkled in his countenance, and he became as agreeable as he had been disagreeable before. For our virtues even, we are dependent on our food and drink, our mother's humour, or our nurse's milk.

We talked of the Westminster election, which now is every where the subject of conversation, and is viewed by all parties with wistful eyes, as hostile armies looked on the combat of Turnus and Æneas. One gentleman's opinion of Mr. Hunt was not very flattering to that great man, for he roundly pronounced him to be either a fool or a madman. It so happened that another of the passengers had been in his company several times, when he was in this country some months ago, and, as in duty bound, warmly took the part of his acquaintance.

"Those who converse with Mr. Hunt," said he, "for one half hour, and then call him either fool or madman, I should not hesitate to say are not overwise themselves; for he is a man of as great stength of mind and

nerves as he is of lungs." "His lungs," replied the other, laughing, "I shall not dispute with you, but do you not think it as well to say nothing of his nerves?" "I do not think it is as well," said his advocate, tartly, "for he is a man of nerve, and of great nerve too; how else think you could he stand as he does against Government, with their vile pack of newspaper hirelings at their back?"

An elderly man who sat in a corner, said he meant offence to no one, but still he thought that Mr. Hunt at the best was a doubtful character. "A mischievous character," said the first speaker, "if you will, but in my mind, not a doubtful one; to me his object seems very plain." "It does not seem so plain to me," replied the old man; "I do not heed what the newspapers say, and always judge for myself; yet for the life of me I cannot make out what he would be at; and, God forgive me if I be wrong, but sometimes I think he is nothing but a government spy, hired to make reform and its friends ridiculous." "You do heed what the newspapers say," said the orator's friend with asperity, "or you would not judge him so harshly; lying is become so habitual to them, that in my conscience I believe they could not tell truth if they would, and the Mr. Hunt of their slanderous paragraphs has as little

resemblance as I have to the Mr. Hunt of real life."

To change the conversation, I asked some questions about the Cavan election. "Cavan election," repeated the last speaker, "what does it signify, or all our elections put together? Our representatives are the devil's representatives, and I say my word with a warrant," continued he laughing, "for they are my Lord Castlereagh's; but were they even all honest men, which God knows they never will be, what would they signify against the English and Scotch members?" "Might not a Scotchman, with equal, or greater reason, ask," said the gentleman who had first spoken, "what signify our representatives against the English and Irish ones? Our connexion with England is now of long standing, while that of Scotland, comparatively speaking, is but of yesterday."

This liberal gentleman was in black, nor was I at any loss to conjecture his profession. He is a clergyman of the established church, and, not without reason, is satisfied with the present order of things; for he has two valuable livings. He seemed an affable and good humoured man, and had none of the reserve, which in a public vehicle, an English clergyman would think it necessary to assume. In common too with almost all the Irish gentry, he had a plainness of manner and speech,

greater than an Englishman of the same rank of life.

With many this plainness is real, but with many more I am sure it is affected, for their behaviour is as courtly in the drawing-room, as it is unpretending in the street. Popular opinion must therefore be of considerable weight, when it thus checks the disposition so natural to man, to show himself in manners, as well as condition, superior to his fellows.

In this respect it is all-powerful over the lower classes, and woe betide the unfortunate wight, who, having, perhaps, travelled as far as London, ventures on his return to make use of finer words, or to pronounce them differently from his neighbours; if he drops ever so little, the rustic tone in speaking, or sees with his eyes instead of his *e'en*, or looks with them instead of *lucks*, he is pursued by the full tide of village ridicule. A man of this description, whom I knew in my youth, had the odious appellation fastened upon him, of English Will; and, if he be still living, I dare say he has it to this day.

Of the distress which the poor of this devoted land of late endured, from the accumulated pressure of cold, hunger, and disease, the clergyman gave me a melancholy recital. Of the distress from want of fuel, the country through which we passed bears evident marks. The trees are almost all stripped of their branches,

and the hedges cut down; and in many places the gentry gave up their plantations even, for firing to the poor. In general, it is but justice to them to say, that their humanity seems to have been great, and though most inadequate to the evil, fully adequate to their means; I speak of those who live on their estates, for those who live from home, heeded little the evil which they did not behold.

At Navan the greater part of the company left the coach; however, I had still the young lady and the old gentleman remaining. He was singularly dressed for the month of June; he was in a delicate state of health, he told me, and cold he seemed to regard as his arch enemy. Beside flannel, he wore a huge great coat, and almost as many waistcoats as the grave-digger in Hamlet. I have often had occasion to remark this preposterous heaping on of cloaths by invalids, until at length they render exercise almost impracticable. I well remember in the town of my birth, an old rheumatic woman called Margaret the flannel woman, who, from the head to the heels, was swathed, one fold after another in it, until she resembled a great bale of wool, rather than a human being.

Navan seems a respectable town, and contains, I should suppose, about three thousand inhabitants. Yesterday was market day, and there was a great crowd. In general they

were well and cleanly dressed; almost all the men had sticks in their hands, but this was of less consequence, for they all seemed perfectly sober.

I congratulated my fellow traveller on this happy alteration, but he shook his head. I am old said he, and have learned to be distrustful of appearances; whiskey is five-pence a noggin, and the times, these two years past, have been miserably bad; but give our lads a good harvest, and if you come this way next year, I warrant you there will be more broken heads than civil tongues among them.

The hill of Tarra, so celebrated in ancient lore, is in the neighbourhood of Navan, and our road took us directly past it. It seemed to me a pretty hillock, rather than a lofty hill, as I had imagined it, and if height be essential to a mountain, it would make but a poor figure among the mountains of my native place. In pastoral beauty, I must own it far exceeds them, and Phelim M'Coal, a giant of old, in choosing it for a habitation, showed no inconsiderable share of taste.

Of this giant, various exploits are related. On the opposite hill of Cromla, are several huge stones, which not nine, nor ninety men of these degenerate days could move. Phelim threw them from Tarra before breakfast, as a morning's recreation. The fame of his prowess spread far and wide, and the champion of the

North, came express to see, and have a trial of strength with him. Phelim's discretion was equal to his valour, and the moment the Northern Giant was seen from afar, he coiled himself up in his child's cradle. The lady of the castle was singing over her needle, and rocking it, when the stranger made his appearance. After courteous salutation, as was fitting between giant and giantess, he asked after her husband. "He had stepped out for a few hundred miles walk," she replied, "but he would be back in an instant." "And who have you got there in the cradle," enquired he. "My youngest child," said the lady carelessly, "and he you see is but an ill thriven brat; my oldest boy indeed is worth looking at, but he is gone out with his father." The affrighted Northern waited no longer parley, and without looking behind him, fled back to his own bogs and mountains.

Tarra, is the Tuva of Ossian or Macpherson, where heroes feasted, and bards, with streaming locks, tuned their harps, and sung the song of other days. In those days, Tavora, as it was likewise called, was the seat of kings; and historians tell us wonders of this royal abode, and dwell with fond minuteness on its hanging gardens, like those of Babylon, and stately halls, where every year, all that was great in rank, and venerable in learning, was assembled. High on a throne of state the monarch

sat exalted, while below were ranged the nobility, clergy, and distinguished men. This admirable, and I believe I may add, unparralleled Parliament, enacted none but the wisest laws, and in all their resolutions consulted nothing but the public good.

Like those who related these marvels, all this grandeur has passed away, and left not a trace behind.

"No more to chiefs and ladies bright,
The harp of Tarra swells,
The chord, alone that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.

"So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more!"

Almost the first blood spilt in the late unfortunate rebellion, was shed on this green hill. A body of the insurgents who had taken their stand there, were attacked and driven from it with great slaughter, by a party of the King's troops; upwards of four hundred were killed, with the loss it is said, of nine only to the victorious party. This extraordinary disproportion was more than paralleled, pardon me the pedantry, at the great battle of Pharsalia, though on each side they were disciplined troops. The loss of the ill-fated republicans exceeded fifteen thousand, while that of their conquerors, scarcely amounted to two

hundred. It is ever in the rout that the great slaughter takes place, and for his own safety therefore, the soldier should look not behind him, but before.

We passed through Nobber, an inconsiderable town, but romantically situated at the foot of a mountain. On the Land of Mountains we were now fairly entered. Of various sizes and shapes, they every where rose around us, making darker with their black heads, the already dark sky. However, there was cultivation on their sides, and the potatoe ridges, and corn fields, in fanciful stripes and compartments, varied the wild landscape with deeper and lighter shades of green. Even in barrenness there is beauty, for the yellow weed intermingled with the corn, however unprofitable to the farmer, was agreeable to the eye. We no longer saw hedges, nor even the traces of them. It was a kind of Arabia Petrea, and the enclosures were all of stones. By a strange confusion of expression, these loose and irregular walls are called ditches. Sometimes, though not always, they have a ditch on one side of them, and this is called the *gripe* of the ditch, a word of which I do not understand the meaning.

To make amends for the want of hedges, we had lakes in plenty. We passed one very long, but narrow; the wind whistled over it sorrowful and chill, and the stream mur-

mured hoarsely to the coming storm. Our temperature in this land of heath and mist, sunk I am sure several degrees, and gladly enough I would now have accepted of one of my fellow traveller's waistcoats. In the lake were several islands, or islets rather, almost of Lilliputian littleness, and one I am sure was not larger than a moderately sized breakfast table. It was fancifully overspread by a low tree with thick branches, and in my mind I compared it to a plantain leaf over a Bramin's tomb.

On the very edge of the lake, and with its front directly facing the watery storm, is a house building for the clergyman of the parish. A more desolate situation for a habitation, can hardly be conceived, and I hope the Reverend Anachoret has ascertained, that the lake is not subject to overflow, I cannot say its banks, for it has none, but its bounds; otherwise, he runs the risk some winter's night, of being as rudely awaked as Alexander and his army were, in their encampment on the Indus.

At the head of the lake stands the village of Shercock. The lady was to leave us here, and a servant came running to meet her, with her little infant in her arms. With fond emotion the mother snatched it, and pressed it to her breast, while the tears filled her eyes, and even ran down her cheeks as she bent over it. Of

all our affections, the purest is that of a mother, for it is the freest from the selfishness so inherent in our nature; yet woeful is it to think of the return which it so frequently meets with. For every joy that this fondled offspring now gives its youthful parent, it will in all probability, give her in advancing years, if it ever reaches them, a hundred pangs. This you will think is looking far forward for a subject of discontent; it is so. Sorrow is soon enough when it comes, and it soon comes.

As we approached Cootehill, the rugged features of the landscape became softened, and the road seemed imperceptibly to lead from savage remoteness and dreary solitariness, to the more cheerful spectacle of the fertile plain and cultivated valley. About three miles from the town, we passed the bleach green of a gentleman of the name of Powell. The sun, which again streamed out, gave more snowy whiteness to the out-spread linen, and brighter verdure to the green.

That I felt sorrow on entering Cootehill is not wonderful; for who ever entered a place from which he had long been absent, without a feeling of greater sorrow than joy? Eight years have rolled their heavy course since I was here last: even then it was greatly changed from what it was when I knew it first. But still, though I had lost many friends, I had some who remained, and in

one hospitable mansion I found a welcome, kind as it had ever been. The venerable owner, to whom, on a former occasion, I endeavoured to render a faint kind of justice, is long passed away, and her place filled up by another.

> " To strangers now descends her heapy store,
> Her race forgotten, and her name no more."

I am now a stranger myself, and the grave has closed on every friend; and, if I had them, on every foe. To the little inn I retired disconsolate, and it lessened not the feeling of melancholy, that, long as I had known Cootehill, it was the first time I had ever sought, or had occasion to seek, the shelter of one. But the world itself is a huge caravansera, and the memory of man passes away like the remembrance of a guest, who hath tarried only one night.

LETTER XII.

Cross-roads.

To write my long letter of yesterday would occupy, you would naturally suppose, the greatest part of the day. It certainly occupied a great part of it, and much more agreeably than it could otherwise have been. The rain and wind were incessant, and in vain I sought in my inn for either newspaper or book: there was not even an almanack, though if I had come a few weeks sooner, I found I might have had a last year's one.

However, the afternoon became fine, and I visited a few of my former walks. I likewise visited the house of my late aged friend. I walked about the little room in which I had passed so many happy hours, and sat in the chair in which I had so often sat before. I looked out of the solitary window, and round on the well-known table and clock. The air of neatness was gone with her who gave it, but the furniture was still the same. Common as is death, such unaccountable beings are we, that when our friends are the subjects of it, we can never fully bring its reality before our

eyes. We associate them so firmly with the chairs on which they sat, with the tables at which they ate, and with the beds on which they lay, that, like the fabled Centaur, they always rise to our imaginations mingled together.

But melancholy for the loss of long gone friends is as unavailing as it is unwise. The first moment of life is the first step towards death; and, quick as the arrow flieth, we haste to follow them.

> "Short is the term to all the race of earth;
> And such the hard condition of our birth."

I took tea with two ladies, with whom I had formerly a slight acquaintance. That, after a lapse of twenty years, they are not young ladies now, need not be told; but they are worthy ones. They are maiden ones likewise, and will probably die, as they have lived, in single blessedness; nor do I know that they are the less happy for this. Would women but think so, their quiet, though solitary state, is oftentimes ill exchanged for the turbulence and discord of a married life. In times past, the father of these ladies was the great Galen of the place, and attended Lord Bellamont, and all the respectable families in the neighbourhood; and in a particular manner Lord Bellamont was so fond of him, that he had him almost constantly at Bellamont Fo-

rest. As is not uncommon with those who haunt the society of the great, his circumstances were little bettered by such association; and on his death, his daughters were left with a scanty provision only. But necessity is the parent of exertion as well as of invention; and, by unremitting care and industry, the youngest of them qualified herself to continue the business, as far, I mean, as the sale and composition of medicines are concerned. The physicians in the neighbourhood are so satisfied with her manner of conducting it, that they give her the preference to all the other apothecaries. The longer we live, the more we learn. In a town in Wales, I was once attended by a female barber; but never before yesterday did I meet with a female apothecary.

Tea, in the country is, I think, a particularly delightful meal; for it kindly accociates with all those grateful matters in which a rural life abounds. We had store of rich cream, and butter fresh from the churn; and there was likewise a pile of what they called slim cake, and honey from the comb to give relish to it.

Tea, in Ireland, you will understand, is not like coffee in France, an appendage to another meal; but a real, substantial one of itself, and generally the substitute for supper. Like a supper, scarcely were the tea things on the present occasion removed, when the whiskey, warm water, and sugar were put upon the

table. Gladly would I have taken none; but that my fair hostesses would have regarded as uncivil; and a gentleman whom they had asked to keep me company, as unwise. I therefore only petitioned for half an hour's delay, that the cream might not curdle on my stomach.

I walked during the interval in the garden, which gently descends down the slope of the hill. It was neither carefully weeded, nor very cleanly kept; and vegetables and flowers were intermingled together. But even in the irregularity of an unweeded garden, there is beauty. In some measure it places us in that boundless contiguity of shade, which the poet panted after; and takes us as it were from man, his vain objects and frivolous pursuits, to the tangled wilderness, where we converse alone with nature, and her towering works.

The evening was now beautiful; the rain of the morning glittered in innumerable drops on the green leaves and thick bushes; and the sun just setting beyond an opposite hill, shed a long stream of beauty on the bending grass, and old trees, and thick groves, and fragrant flowers. How often, in times long past, have I looked on that green hill and setting sun! With what emotions swelled then my heart; reckoning the present for nothing, and revelling in the dream of future bliss! But how, in the expressive language of Scripture, is the

gold changed, and the pure gold become dim! How chilled is that heart, and how cheerless am I now; regretting, though not loving the past; and fearing, though hoping nothing from the future; counting the fleeting sands of my brief hour-glass, like one who had no pleasure in them; yet lamenting them when they are for ever gone, as bearing me nearer to that immeasurable strand, where are wrecked the frail works of the lives of all the sons and daughters of men.

Nature's wild fragrance was but ill replaced by the flavour of the whiskey, to which I was shortly summoned; for the companion was impatient, and he was asked, as I have said, on my account. In Ireland, it is regarded by the ladies as a poor compliment to ask a gentleman alone; so distrustful are they of their own charms, or so well aware of the charms of whiskey. It was the parliament whiskey, as I now find the licensed liquor is generally called, which these fair ladies gave us. It is not for me to undervalue the productions of my country; but I cannot forbear saying, that I scarcely know a more injurious, or to my taste a more unpleasant liquor. However, to avoid offence, by dint of copious dilution with water, and plenteous mixture of sugar and raspberry juice, I contrived to get down a large glass of it. Without any effort, or extraordinary mixture that I could perceive, the

other guest got down more than one; and I verily believe, that in perfect sincerity of heart he regarded it as the perfection of drink. Happening to make some allusion to the claret and burgundy I had so lately drank in France, he asked me if I had got any whiskey? No, I replied, but if I had wished it, I might have had brandy to my heart's content. He said nothing, but looked as if he thought that neither wine nor brandy, nor any other liquor, could compensate for the want of this delectable one.

Most unaccountable is the prepossession of nationality, and influence of habit on the mind of man. The worthy Scotchman, and he is a very worthy one, who accompanied me on my little tour, no matter how exquisite were the wines on the table, always finished the evening with a glass of brandy and water, for the sake, as he himself expressed it, of Auld Lang Syne. To this standard of association he referred every thing he eat, drank, or saw; and as French manners, cooking, and scenery, were not Scotch, they were nothing in his estimation. But the grand advantage of his country, was neither in its food nor its fields, but in the more important article of its religion. It was truly laughable to remark the superc.lious air with which he viewed the churches. He looked on the rich altar, and listened to the full choir, alike deaf and blind

to their charms; and mimicked, in contemptuous pity, the endless bowings and harlot-like courtesies of their mountebank preachers, as he termed them. As Plato congratulated himself that he was born the contemporary of Sophocles, and a Greek; he I am sure viewed himself with greater complacency for being the countryman of John Knox; and that, while the idolatrous land where we sojourned was sunk in superstition, the pure flood of gospel grace was poured on highly favoured Scotland; and, like the precious ointment on the head of Aaron, went down to its very skirts.

I am fully sensible that a countryman of my own would have had similar prepossession, and in no long time have discovered how precious a gem was his Emerald Isle, compared to the Golconda of France; for had every thing else failed him, he would manfully have opposed his potatoes, both to grapes and lilies, and thanked his kind stars that he was born in the land of them. Should we wonder, therefore, at English arrogance, founded as it is on acknowledged superiority, and favoured climate and soil, while the rude inhabitant of the Scottish mountain, and the bleak tenant of the Irish bog, find in the very forlornness of their situation, subject of importance, and food for pride.

This morning I left Cootehill before the rising of the sun, and in the latter end of June, this is no sluggard's hour. I had engaged a jaunting-car the evening before, and my good landlord, in order to be punctual, came at least forty minutes before his time. I was not sorry, for I had passed the night full of tossing to and fro, until the very *dawning of the day. My sleep even was not repose, for all the deceased friends of my waking thoughts, clad in their burial garments, came to visit me, and to invite me to be one of them.*

I passed the shady bowers of Dawson's Grove, and the thick planting of Fremount. The sun just rising, illuminated the silent habitation of the latter. Its master's present one no sun can penetrate. To this excellent man I was indebted for many kindnesses, and often and often have we walked for hours together, planning improvements for this beautiful green hill. Alas! the place he presses of his parent earth, is all his portion now. He had it seems dreadful apprehensions of the fever, and took every possible precaution to guard against it. But vain are the precautions of man against the decrees of fate, and one day that he was receiving rent, an old tenant, with his head tied up in a handkerchief, made his way to him. He would have come sooner he said, but he was only

just recovering from the fever. In the greatest agitation, my poor friend bid him instantly be gone. I winna gang, said the old man till I pay my rent, I had trouble enough in getting here, and dinna choose to travel eight miles on a fool's errand. My friend at length rose from his chair, and pushed him out of the room; but scarcely had he returned to it, when he put his hand to his head, and exclaimed, I have taken the fever. That very night, I believe, the symptoms shewed themselves, and he died on the ninth day of his disorder.

I turned round on a little hill, and took a last look of Fremount and Cootehill, and bade them, in my mind, a long and everlasting adieu. Such is the world, says an admired writer, that we find in it absolute misery, but happiness only comparative; we may suffer as much pain as we can possibly endure, though we can never obtain as much happiness as we might possibly enjoy. I have had moments of happiness at Cootehill, and greater ones elsewhere; but were they all put together, they would not perhaps compensate for what at that moment I felt. It was the tearing off of the drapery of Fancy from the ground of human life; and the dropping of Time's everlasting curtain on the scenes of my youth.

On descending the hill, an accident hap-

pened to one of our wheels; and it could not have happened in a better place, for it was just opposite the door of a smith. He was in bed, but we were not sparing of noise, and in no long time he blew up his furnace, and set us to rights. His charge was only three-pence, though a knave, on seeing my impatience, would have asked at least four times as much.

I arrived in Monaghan a little after eight. The Londonderry mail, in which I had intended to take a seat, came in shortly afterwards, but so filled, both inside and out, that there was neither room for my trunk nor myself. A lady stepped out, followed by no less than five children; and a gentleman told me that he had been obliged to carry two of them on his knees the whole way from Dublin; and that the poor woman, who was an officer's wife, had carried the other three herself. It is the wish, I believe, of every parent to have children; but they are unpleasant companions to go travelling or campaigning with.

As I was disappointed in the coach, I resolved to deviate from the direct road to Strabane, and go round by Inniskillen. In Monaghan I had no inducement to stop, for I have no longer an acquaintance there. The honest apothecary, of whom heretofore I have made mention, is no more to bid me welcome, and is likewise dead of this terrible fever.

He was a jolly, and good humoured man, and with Prince Henry, I felt wonder that so much flesh could not keep in a little life. But but let me not be ludicrous; peace rest and abide with him.

After breakfast I walked forward on the Enniskillen road. I sauntered rather, for I was in no hurry, and the day soon became hot. Between twelve and one I reached the public-house where I am. It is a mere cottage, but so neatly white-washed and thatched, that I resolved to seek transient shelter from the burning sun.

I was shewn into a room so clean and comfortable, that every time I looked round on it, and out on the bright sun and cloudless sky, I felt less inclination to move. The snug little bed, too, invited me to repose, and at length I threw myself on it, and slept several hours, undisturbed by vision or dream.

I then rose and dined, and my meal was quite a pastoral one. I had a bowl of rich cream, with bread and butter, and new laid eggs. Honey I sought, but in vain, but I was more lucky in rummaging an old shelf for books. Beside the Bible, and almanack for this year of grace, I found an odd volume of Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, and another of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. As I found I could have the room to myself, I now resolved to stay for

the night. I am little more than four miles from Monaghan, but business is not urgent, and I might go further and fare worse.

My supper is at this instant preparing with all the bustle incident to such an occasion. A few minutes ago I stepped out to the little kitchen, and saw a couple of chickens putting on the spit. They are small ones, but I never was an admirer of great dishes, and just now I should prefer them, even to the garnished boar, were it as large as one of the eight wild ones seen roasting in Antony's kitchen in Alexandria. If you have read Plutarch, you will understand this allusion, and if you have not, I envy you, for you have a great pleasure to come.

The good landlady, who is a widow, and not a young one neither, is the Dame Leonardo of my frugal fare. "My worthy lady," I said to her, "I like your house and yourself; I like your food, but I do not like your drink. Now don't be afraid, but tell me honestly, have you got never a bottle of Innishowen, in some snug corner which nobody knows of but yourself?" — "In troth, and upon my conscience," replied she, "I have not, and I would na say that to a lie for all the cloth in Robin Thomson's Green; nor liquor kind, but something more than a gallon of what I sent you, and I strange greatly it does not please you, for it is greatly praised

in these parts." — "*I* cannot praise it," said I, "but since no better is to be had, I must be doing with it." — "Better may be *had*," said the good woman, with a low voice and sly wink. "I think a gentleman like you would na harm a poor widow, and I am sure you are no gauger." — "I am not, I assure you," I replied, "as you may judge by this old black coat of mine; a gauger would be better clad, and well mounted too."

"Bravely I know it," said she, turning round to her maid, "for not one of them could speak half an hour together, without blaspheming, or some out-of-the-way discourse or other; and you see," continued she in an under voice, "he only tasted his whiskey because it was before dinner; ough! I warrant you they would na be so nice, but would take it before breakfast, and Roscrea and Innishowen, all the same to them. Weel, Sur, just go back to your book again, and I'll send the lassie over the burn this blissed minute, and if a drap of the native is to be had for love or money, you shan't want it."

Actually I see the fair Atalanta, with flowing tresses and zone unbraced, running across the fields, and from the rate she goes at, I may augur at least a speedy return. Bear she even back to me the quintessence of this northern nectar, I dare say I shall not take too much; but should I, I have no long

journey to take, for my bed is just at my elbow.

My hostess is laying the cloth, and would be very communicative if she could, but I do not encourage her, for her stories relate to no one I ever saw or knew. In Cootehill it was different, and I passed hours with my old host in talking of woeful ages long ago betide. Hereafter you shall have my Recollections of Cootehill, and I shall here relate you a recent horrid occurrence there. My landlord related it with vehemence of action, which might have satisfied Quintilian himself; but I am no orator, and shall relate it more coolly.

A man of the name of Mayne, the acting agent to several estates, proceeded to eject from his lands another of the name of Simpson, who lived a few miles from the town. This man, it is said, is, or at least had been, a Quaker; but the Quakers deny this, and assert that he never did belong to their communion. However that be, it must be a peculiar communion which never had a ruffian belonging to it. When I formerly resided in Cootehill, I knew this Simpson; and he then sustained an excellent character; but character, like every thing earthly, is subject to change; and, with embarrassed circumstances, he had, it seems, become a most litigious and turbulent man. He was greatly feared; for he

was known to be as resolute as his affairs were desperate: and though he owed several sums, no one, for a long time, was found hardy enough to endanger his life in the apprehension of him. He had sworn, in the phrase of the country, to be the death of whomsoever should attempt to lay hands on him; and, though he had broken a hundred oaths of amendment, it was thought (so much more prone are we to fear evil than to hope good), that he would keep the present one.

Unfortunately Mr. Mayne disregarded what he considered idle blusterings; and, accompanied by the man to whom possession was to be given, and the coroner, who, from the illness of the sheriff, was to give it, rode to the fatal spot. As they expected, they found Simpson on the lands; and, what they did not expect, he submitted in the quietest manner to them. There was a politeness even in his manner, which for a long while had been unusual to him; though along with it there was a stern kind of solemnity, that led them to dread mischief, not to them, but to himself.

They soothed him, therefore; and the coroner, in particular, spoke kindly to him, and invited him to dinner for the following Sunday. "Don't be cast down man," said he, cordially shaking his hand; "there is a cure for every thing, they say, but death; and I have something in view for you, which, if you only

do your own part, will make you as comfortable as ever." With a steady voice and unruffled countenance, the other replied, "I shall dine with you on Sunday, if on Sunday morning you send me word that you wish it." Saying this, the ruffian stept within the hall, and instantly returned to the door with a fowling-piece in his hand; and deliberately levelled it at Mr. Mayne, who at the moment was leaning over his horse, with one foot only in the stirrup. "Friend Tom," said the wretch, with the most perfect coolness, "thou hast brought the coroner hither for a pitiful job, and it were a shame if he had his journey for nothing." He then fired and shot the unfortunate man in the head, and with the same deliberation turned into the house, and shut the door after him.

The wounded man was borne back to Cootehill, where he lingered a few days in the utmost agony both of body and mind. He was perfectly sensible to the last; desirous beyond expression to live, yet well knowing that he must die. Sickness, and still more old age, is the down-hill path which conducts us gently to the quiet grave; but death in the midst of life, and its busy objects and pursuits, is the huge Tarpeian rock, which kills us in imagination, before it kills us in very deed.

The murderer has absconded, but it is

thought he cannot escape. The whole country are in pursuit of him; for as party is not concerned, popular feeling takes its natural course. With indignation, however, still there is fear, and with greater reason than ever; for he who kills one man is likely to kill another, and, like Partridge, no person chooses to be that one himself.

After all, it is probable that he will be easily taken, subdued by remorse and dread of punishment as he is. To the perpetration of atrocious crime, generally succeeds the most fearful weakness. I remember once following on the Thames a boat, in which was a wretched French sailor, charged with murder on the seas; and who, in passing through London Bridge, was trembling to a degree that seemed almost convulsive. Wretched creature! he needed not to have had such a dread of the water, for a few weeks afterwards he was hanged.

LETTER XIII.

Thornhill.

I SLEPT sounder in my little rustic bed, than I have oftentimes done in perfumed chambers. As I intended walking a few miles before breakfast, I rose early; but on opening the casement, I found it rained violently, and blew quite a storm. There is no occasion, with Ossian, to bid the winds of Ierne to rise; for one never travels far, that it does not rise of its own accord.

I breakfasted where I was, and again betook myself to Clarendon. This great statesman is an indifferent writer; but fate wrought for him a subject which bears him up. The history of Charles is a melancholy history, and scarcely can it be so told, as not to be interesting. His mild and dignified conduct at his trial and execution would redeem his faults, had they been a hundred times greater than they were: and did we not know the madness of party, and contagion of example, we would wonder that so good a man should have had so sad an end. It is idle to talk of his having conspired against the liberties of

his subjects. His predecessors had taken good care to leave them no liberties to be conspired against; and, in a particular manner, so completely were they subdued by one, that, like eastern slaves, they licked the dust before the foot which trod on them. Henry the Eighth, who was almost worshipped in life, and reverenced in death, was not a mere despot, after the fashion of Europe, but a downright Dey of Algiers, who governed by the whip and executioner; and indulged himself in every wantonness of brutality, and caprice of cruelty. One of his daughters is the name of all that is bloody in bigotry; and, with the heart of a king, the more fortunate one, had that of a tyrant too.

We have read of a barbarous monarch of old, who, in the mere wantonness of power, pierced with an arrow the heart of his wretched cup-bearer, while the wretched father stood applauding by; and we know not which to detest most, the ruthless tyrant, or the subdued slave. But how many degrees was he less a one, who, when his right hand was struck off, for having written an idle pamphlet, took off his hat with the other, and bade God save the tyrant by whose order it was done? Yet this worm was an Englishman, and the tyrant was the good queen Elizabeth, whom ignorance or misrepresentation extols

for her love of her people, and tender regard for their privileges and rights.

That the constitution admits, and stands in need of amendment, few I believe, except those who are interested in its abuses, will now dispute; but let it be fairly and openly sought, in the encreased knowledge of the present day, not in the rude practices of barbarous times, when the monarch was an imbecile pageant, or a despotic tyrant, and the people were turbulent savages, or prostrate slaves. If all that has been written and spoken about the precious inheritance of liberty we derive from our ancestors were brought together, I do not say that it would be the largest, but it would certainly be one of the foolishest books in the world. But there is a cant in politics as well as in religion; and it is alike injurious to both. No cause can be long sustained, except by truth.

Towards noon it ceased raining, and I took leave of my kind hostess with great civility on each side. If I ever came the way again, she assured me, I should have the room to myself, even though she should turn out the Dacre to make way for me. This perhaps was the highest compliment she could have paid me; for the Dacre, by which she meant Mr. Dacre Hamilton, is the agent of several large estates, and, by the shameful non-residence

of their owners, is the great potentate of the neighbourhood. However, I think it likely I shall never have occasion to dispossess him.—In all probability, I go this way for the last time.

It was evening when I reached Clones. It is a clean as well as neat little town, and has the look of comfort which industry rarely fails to give. I passed the church, which is a small and modern building. There are few old churches here compared to old men, for they are almost all subsequent to the grand rebellion. In the first moments of the surprize of that horrible transaction, the wretched protestants, in most places, fled for shelter to the churches, either from confidence in their sanctity or their strength. Their strength availed little against fire or famine, and their sanctity was disregarded. It is likely even that the infuriated and bigoted multitude rather considered it a special interference of Providence, which, at one and the same time, put in their power the vile brood of their enemies, and the nests which had fostered them.

Eighteen of these unfortunate persons were butchered in the church of Clones, and the church itself was burned. I wish not, though I am native here, to palliate the horrors of the Irish massacre, as not inaptly it is called. Human nature, as is remarked by a great

historian, on no occasion appears so detestable, and at the same time so absurd, as in those religious persecutions, which sink men below infernal spirits in wickedness, and below the beasts in folly. Still it should be remembered, that these barbarous persecutors, had for ages been barbarously used, and tremendous as were the evils they inflicted, they were almost the unavoidable re-action of those which had been inflicted on themselves. The spirits of uncivilised men are easily roused and difficultly appeased; their conquerors therefore should take heed, not wantonly to exasperate them; subjection must follow uncontrollable power, but no power short of extermination can control revenge.

I had good accommodation at my inn. I might have had a flesh meat dinner had I chosen it, but in this land of flocks, and season of grass, I preferred a more pastoral one. I had cream and eggs as the day before, and this time I got the honey I desired. Where it agrees with the constitution, it is an admirable sweet, and so highly nutritious, that the Centaur Chiron, we are told, fed Achilles with it to give him the force requisite for martial toil. In days not fabulous, figs were the principal food of the athletæ, or public wrestlers, and these are only nourishing by the honey or sugar they contain.

To say nothing of the barbarity of frequent

butchery, men for their own sakes should consume less than they do of animal food. Long life is the first of wishes, and the immoderate use of flesh meat, as much perhaps as of ardent spirits, tends to the shortening of it. It is the torpedo too of our frames, and benumbs all our faculties both of mind and body; like Egyptian thieves, who strangle those they embrace. Scarcely is animal food, in considerable quantity, taken into the stomach, when it increases the action of the heart, and heat of the body; if I may so speak, it withdraws the mind's energy from the brain, to the loaded stomach and labouring breast, and thereby induces torpor in all the animal functions. Drowsiness is the rarely failing attendant on a full meal; and so little seems it the tendency of eating to beget pleasure, and so much to beget sleep, that the Greeks, who adorned all that they touched, prohibited flowers in their sacrifices to Ceres; and regarded the *poppy* as alone sacred to her.

The following morning I was preparing to continue my journey on foot, when I was prevailed on by a gentleman going the same road, to join him in a chaise. We had a very handsome one, and a stout pair of horses, out of the reach of caricature. My companion was a merchant of Dundalk, and is abroad in quest of what is now very difficultly found, which is money. Miss O'Neill, if she is not a native,

passed her early life in this town. Her father was the manager of some little party which played in a brewhouse or barn there; and a hundred times, the gentleman has seen her, when a little girl, running about barefooted and barelegged. As she grew up she became the heroine of this humble theatre, and played with great applause in tragedy, comedy, and farce. On one of those occasions, Mr. Talbot happened to be present, and was so struck with the promise of the young actress, that he carried her with him to Belfast; and I have reason to believe, that to his instructions he attributes much of her unparalleled success; but this is idle; genius like Miss O'Neill's, must sooner or later have blazed forth, and required little other teacher than itself. She was afterwards brought to Dublin as a substitute for Miss Smith, and I know not that she was regarded as an equivalent one. The destiny of actresses is oftentimes as unaccountable, as that of the personages whom they represent; and the difference of the welcome which these two ladies received from a London audience need not be told.

That a young woman brought up as Miss O'Neill had been, should be a little intoxicated, by a change sudden as the wildest shifting of the scene on which she moves, is not to be wondered at; but to her praise be it told, she remembers her evil days, and those who be-

friended her in them; a shopkeeper to whom she and her father were indebted for various acts of kindness, fell lately into indigence. She sent for him to London, and having supported him for some time in her own house, gave him money again to commence business. I trust, for her own sake, that she will long preserve this compassionate heart; for should it ever be her misfortune to lose it, she will not be half the actress that she is.

We passed through a little place called Maguire's Bridge. This town, or village rather, has its name from the ancient, and in days past, illustrious family of Maguire. They were once the mighty chieftains of Fermanagh, but the stream of life has long passed over them. The present representative of the family, if I am not misinformed, is a working man living in indigence, on the wide spreading lawns, which, but for the world's ever turning wheel, would be his own. These lands are now in the possession of the Earl of Enniskillen, one of whose ancestors greatly distinguished himself in our calamitous wars.

The great Lord Maguire, as by some he is called, and doubtless by more is reckoned, was one of the planners of the grand rebellion, but is scarcely accountable for its horrors, as he was taken up a short while before its breaking out; he was transmitted to London, and long kept in confinement; but was lucky

enough at length to escape, and notwithstanding diligent search was made after him, to remain nearly three months undiscovered; but in hanging, as has long been remarked, there is a fate, and it was his not to escape the executioner; and one day that he was looking out of his little window, he was recognized by a person who was passing by, and again apprehended.

Enniskillen is a large and well-built town, and by its situation, as well as the gallantry of its inhabitants, was enabled to make a successful stand against the army of King James. The present inhabitants exult not a little in this, and other gallant deeds of their ancestors, and regard the Revolution as an event in which they had no inconsiderable share; inasmuch as the battle of the Boyne was in a great measure gained by a charge of the Enniskillen dragoons; this prepossession is not altogether without foundation.

But the great ornament of Enniskillen, to my apprehension at least, is neither its loyalty nor courage, but the extensive and celebrated lake, at the head of which it stands; I wish you could see it as it now spreads before me, with its green islands, numerous it is said as the days of the year, and verdant banks sloping in rich cultivation, and graceful planting, to the very water's edge. But I shall say nothing more of its beauties, for they would require a

better eye than mine fully to perceive them, and a far abler pen to describe.

I stopped but an instant in the town, and walked on to this place, which is a vicarage house, and inhabited by an old relation of my own. I had neither seen nor heard of him for many years, and I feared that amidst the wreck of my other friends, he too had perished; but happily I found him living and well, and almost as jovial as ever. He is an innocent, and I have no doubt a religious man, though he would not serve Mrs. Hannah More as the model of a clergyman, for he is not a Methodist either in manner, or in speech. He holds the whole sect indeed in utter contempt, and has no greater term of reproach for any one, than that he is a swadler. By the bye, he is not over fond of Presbyterians, but he makes an exception in favour of me, on the flattering ground of my liberality. I tell him that the Church of England service is far more beautiful, than the extempore and unadorned prayers of my own church; and believe me I only tell him what I think.

The evening was dedicated to carousing, and my good old friend swallowed plentiful potations of cold rum punch, which, considering the season, was a grateful and well-chosen beverage. For a while we drained the bowl in all due jollity; but the jollity of an old man is fleeting as his few remaining years, and as

the liquor exerted its influence, age's natural disposition, more and more appeared. Had it been my object in this journey, like the king's in the Persian Tales, to seek a truly happy man, I might at first have imagined that I had found him here; but I now know too much of human life, to trust lightly to appearances. In wine there is truth, and liquor opened wide the sluices of my kind host's eyes as well as heart; merriment gave way to thoughtfulness, and thoughtfulness to sorrow, which soon dissolved itself in tears. In bitter anguish, he recalled to mind the friends who are for ever gone, of whom my own father was the dearest, and wept over the six fine sons by whom he was surrounded when I last saw him, and of whom only one now remains. I know not, nor did I venture to ask him, whether he mourns or rejoices over him. I would not sadden your view of life, but every where you perceive, it has few prizes compared to its blanks. "Ulysses," said Seneca, "had only one rock to dread, but life has many."

Happily, however, my aged relation's feelings, like my own, are not long lived, and I found him in the morning as cheerful as ever, and eager to have breakfast over, that we might visit the island of Devenish, which lies almost opposite his door.

We crossed over a few fields and came to the water's edge. A grey headed old man,

with beard venerable as Charon's, and garments as rusty too, drew forth from its shelter of sedges and rushes, a boat scarcely less old and crazy than himself; but we ran not the more danger of this; the day was beautiful; the heavens were without a cloud, and the water was smooth as the sky.

We stepped ashore on the green and romantic island, and passed several hours in wandering over its small but hallowed bounds. In ancient days it was the abode of piety and religion, when devout monks counted their beads in holy meditation, and recluse anchorites retired from this vain and perishable world, to fit themselves for a better and everlasting one. They had a paradise where they were; nor can a spot better adapted to inspire the peace and good will, which is the essence of religion, easily be found; the very air breathes kindness, and is fragrant with innumerable flowers, which nature, in unchecked profusion, scatters around. Could I recall past times, and those for whose sake I most regret it, how gladly would I renounce the delusive world, to live for ever in this sweet sequestered isle. — Idle thought!

> "Shall heaven for me extend the narrow span,
> Whose bounds were fixed before his race began?"

The monastery is in ruins, and is not the less interesting on that account. The flocks

of the field graze therein, and the owl builds its nest in its ivyed walls. At no great distance stands one of those extraordinary round towers so numerous in Ireland, and which are conjectured to have served the purposes of religion, though for no reason that I know of, except that no other use can be found for them. They are built of hewn stone generally about a foot square, and with scarcely any mortar; yet they have stood for ages, and if there occurs no convulsion of nature, they will stand for ages to come. The one I have just been seeing is seventy-six feet in height, and something more than forty in circumference. The roof is in the form of a cone, and finished with a huge stone, of shape not unlike a bell. Near the top are four windows, not very agreeably decorated, for over each of them is a death's head. To my companion I am indebted for this piece of information, for the death's heads were not visible to me. There is no occasion, indeed, I should see them by day, for I see them often enough at night.

It was late in the evening when we returned, gratified though tired. But the gratification continued, while fatigue vanished before my friend's hospitable and hearty cheer. We were long of parting, and this time I had the pleasure of seeing him happy, and of leaving him so.

To day we visited the superb mansion of the Earl of Belmore. When the gate shut in the noble owner from the world, one should have thought that care would never have followed him, did we not know that there is only one home where care does not follow us. His lordship is now travelling in Syria or Palestine, seeking the happiness which, in the language of old stories, he may travel to the well of the world's end before he finds.

We afterwards drove through two other noblemen's demesnes, but I shall neither trouble your nor myself with a description of them. The lordly abode, the gay parterre and costly furniture, may be better seen elsewhere than in Ireland, and is not what I came to see. It is the grandeur, and even gloom of nature, I seek after, the manners of the cottage, and the beauties of the fields.

I would for this evening have obtained a truce from drinking, and with difficulty have obtained it until nine o'clock. My kind host loves his bottle, but he never loves it so well as when he has a friend to share it with him; and to night we drain the bowl to drown sorrow for my departure, as the day I came we drained it to denote joy. It is the custom, but, in my mind, though I am native here and to the matter borne, it is one more honoured in the breach than the observance.

LETTER XIV.

Thornhill.

We sat late last night to dispel care for an event which after all did not take place. It has been raining since earliest morning, nor, to tell you the truth, do I greatly regret a circumstance which detains me a day longer with an old friend, whom in all likelihood I shall never again behold. Besides, I have had abundant occupation in turning over a huge old volume of Irish histories, more remarkable, it must be owned, for zeal than liberality, for while the Protestants are every where represented as angels, the poor Catholics only want hoofs and horns to make them downright devils. However, in spite of partiality and uncouth phraseology, I read with interest a long account of the trial and execution of the unfortunate lord whom I named in my last, and even in this brief abridgment you will possibly read it with interest too. As far as an abridgment will admit, I give it in the words of my author, for, spite of his prejudice, I find in the simplicity of his narration a charm.

The Lord Maguire was to be the first mover in the bloody tragedy, and was principally intended for the surprisal of the castle of Dublin, and the securing or murdering of the lords justices and council. With this intent he came to Dublin, accompanied by several of his friends, but the plot being that night detected, he fled from his usual lodgings near the Castle, and hid himself at a tailor's in the outskirts of the town, where he was shortly afterwards found, standing with his cloak wrapped round him, and his body nearly bent double, in an obscure corner of one of the lofts. He was immediately brought before the lords justices and council, to whom he confessed sufficient to warrant his committal to the Castle; and the narrator relates with great exultation, and as an extraordinary manifestation of Providence, that he was inclosed there on the twenty-third of October, which was the very day he expected to have been the master of it.

In the summer of the following year, he, with Hugh Oge M'Mahon, an unfortunate chieftain of the county of Monaghan, was sent to England and confined in the Tower, from which place they escaped, and after being at liberty nearly two months, were retaken in the manner I have already mentioned.

M'Mahon was tried and executed almost immediately afterwards; but Lord Maguire

made such a defence that his final trial did not take place till some time in the following year. *He moved to be tried by his peers, as baron of Enniskillen in Ireland, but the judge* declared that an Irish baron might be tried by a jury in England. This opinion was assented to by both houses of parliament, by whom an order was issued for his immediate trial.

The whole of the first jury were challenged by him, and a second being at length impanelled, they were required to declare on oath that they had no share in the purchase of the Irish rebels' estates. A great variety of witnesses were examined, the particulars of whose evidence I regret I have not room to enter into, for I am sure you would have found them interesting. However there was little occasion for them, for the prisoner's own confession before the lords justices was produced against him, on which he was almost immediately found guilty, and, according to the cruel supererogation of our ancient law, condemned to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered.

After his body was thus humanely disposed of, his soul became the next object of concern, and the king's counsel with great kindness, as my author says, demanded of him whether he would have any ministers to prepare him for his end; to which he replied,

"I will have none of them, but I desire that some gentlemen of my own religion may have access to me, and some who are my fellow-prisoners in the Tower, to speak with me in the presence of the keeper." The judge answered, "that he must name somebody in particular," and his lordship accordingly named a Mr. Walter Montague. After a moment's pause the judge again said, "you must prepare yourself to die on Saturday next." "Not on Saturday next, my lord," exclaimed Maguire, "I desire a fortnight's time to prepare myself." "That is too long a time," replied the judge, "and I cannot grant it, but you shall have a convenient time." "I desire you, my lord," said the other, "that I may have three days' notice at least to prepare myself." "You shall have three days' warning," replied the judge. "I desire further," resumed the unfortunate man, "that my execution may be altered, and that I may not be hanged and quartered." "That lies not in my power to grant," said the judge, "but here are some members of the House of Commons in court, and you had best address yourself to them, that they may acquaint the House with your desires."

Lord Maguire then casting his eyes round the court, with a raised voice said, "I shall desire the gentlemen of the House of Commons, so many as are here present, to move

the House in my behalf, that I may have a fortnight's time to prepare myself for death, and that the manner of my execution may be changed." To which sir John Clotworthy, after whispering with the others, made answer; "my lord, I have been your schoolfellow heretofore, and have found some ingenuity in you; and I have seen letters of yours importing some remorse of conscience for this fact; and I shall therefore move the House, that you may have some ministers appointed to come to you, and likewise acquaint them with your other desires."

Then the prisoner, departing from the bar, Mr. Prynne earnestly advised him to confer with some godly ministers for the good of his poor soul; but he answered as before, that he would have none at all, unless he might have those of his own religion; and so, continues my narrator, he stubbornly departed through the hall towards the Tower; the people all crowding and running to behold his person.

A day or two after his trial he petitioned the parliament, that they would be graciously pleased, in mercy to mitigate the rigour of his sentence, and turn it to that degree which most befitted the denomination he had. But his petition was rejected by a great majority, and ten days after sentence was passed, he was drawn on a sledge to Tyburn, where,

being removed into a cart, he kneeled and prayed a short while.

The sheriff then addressed him, representing the heinousness of his crimes, and the vast numbers that had been murdered by that conspiracy for which he was to suffer; and therefore exhorted him to express his sorrow for it. In answer, Lord Maguire, briefly replied, "I desire Almighty God to forgive me my sins." — "Do you believe you did well," asked the sheriff, "in those wicked actions?" — "I have but a short while to live," replied Maguire, "do not trouble me." — "It is but just, sir," said the sheriff, "I should trouble you now, that you may not be troubled for ever." "I beseech you, sir," said Maguire, "trouble me not; I am not disposed to give you any account, pray give me leave to pray." — "Who were the actors or plotters with you?" asked the persevering sheriff, "or had you any commission or not?" — "For God's sake," replied the poor harrassed man, "give me leave to depart in peace."

He was further asked, "If he had not some pardon or bull from the Pope for what he had done?" — "I saw none of it," replied he, "all that I knew I delivered in my examinations; all that I said in my examinations is true; I beseech you let me depart in peace." He then, without returning them further

answers to their questions, continued intently looking on a paper which he held in his hand, as he had done from his first coming. The sheriff, whose humanity my narrator greatly praises, now commanded his pockets to be searched; but a crucifix and a few beads only were found in them.

He then read a paper to the people, in which he asked foregiveness, first of God, and next of the world; he declared that he forgave, from the bottom of his heart, all his enemies and persecutors; that he died a Roman Catholic, was heartily sorry for all his sins, and most confidently trusted to be saved by the passion, merits, and mercy of his dear Saviour Jesus Christ.

Preparing himself for the executioner, he said, "I beseech you, gentlemen, let me have a little time to say my prayers."—"You shall have time," replied the sheriff, "if you answer ingenuously to those questions we shall ask you. Whether do you account the shedding of Protestant blood to be a sin or not? and, Whether do you desire pardon of God for that sin?"—"Sir," said Maguire, "I do desire pardon of God for all my sins; I cannot resolve you in any thing."—"You can resolve me," said the sheriff, "what your conscience dictateth to you. Do you think it was a sin or not?"—"I cannot determine it," replied Maguire almost impa-

tiently, "pray give me a little time to prepare myself."

Almost all this time his eye was upon his papers, repeating, (muttering it is in the original,) words from them to himself; whereupon the sheriff demanded them from him, and after a pause, he flung them indignantly down. The last question put to him was, "Whether there was any agreement between his party and the Recusants in England? To which he answered, "I take it upon my death, I do not know that any man knew of it." He was now desired to prepare himself for death, upon which, with a loud voice, he said, "I do beseech all the Catholics that are here present to pray for me. I beseech God to have mercy on my soul," and almost in the instant of repeating these words he was executed.

The papers that were taken from him consisted of two; one written in Latin from his confessor, a consolatory one, and a copy of prayers, as a direction for his devotion on his way to, and at the place of execution; the other was a letter from some follower or humble friend, who intended to accompany him to Tyburn. It is as follows:—

Most loving sir,

My master's coach shall wait on you infallibly. That day your friend William shall go

close to the coach all the way upon a red horse, with a white hat, and in a grey jacket, and then you cannot choose, by the grace of God, but to know the coach. I send you this holy stone, by virtue whereof you may gain a plenary physic in saying any certain prayer. I beseech you, dear sir, be of good courage, for you shall not want any thing for that happy journey you are taking. Pray earnestly for your country, and for your dear sons, that God may prosper them. I do humbly intreat you likewise to pray for me, your own poor afflicted servant,

Your poor GREY.

Underneath were a few words in Irish, of which the English is — "My thousand blessings unto you, son of my soul."

LETTER XIV.

Strabane.

I LEFT my friend's house as I had come, on foot. I might have visited him more to his mind, for the good people of Fermanagh are not a little proud, and are so accustomed to see their guests on horseback, that they regard a gentleman as a kind of Centaur, half man and half horse.

I had walked about a mile, when I heard the rumbling of some vehicle behind me, and on looking round I saw a gentleman in a gig descending the hill. I walked brisker forward, for just then I was more disposed to meditate than talk, and conversation is indispensible here between those who have so close connexion as to travel the same road. But the charioteer was not thus easily to be got rid of; and the faster I walked, the faster he drove, and as I found I could not avoid him, I fairly stood still.

He called me by my name as soon as he could conveniently be heard. The voice I thought I knew, but the figure and face were unknown. "You do not, I perceive, recollect

me," said he. "You will excuse me," said I, "but I really do not." "I do not wonder that you do not," resumed he, "for I almost wish not to recollect myself, but my name is B — and you may remember passing a couple of days at my house, a few years ago."

This instantly recalled him to my mind, though he was as much changed, as if not a few, but many years had passed over him. At that time he was a jolly, good-humoured looking young man, squeezed into a pair of buckskin breeches, and tight sky-blue coat. He is now as lank and lean as an anatomy, and wears a full suit of black, and a hat with a low crown, and most lugubrious dimension of brim. I had no difficulty in discovering the cause of this extraordinary metamorphose, nor did I need to be told that he was become a Methodist, and that he had all the zeal of a young proselyte; but his friendliness was unabated, and he insisted with so much warmth, on my accompanying him home, that I consented. It was better than fourteen miles out of my way, but what signified a few miles in comparison to the society of so good a man? Besides, I like, in travelling, to stretch myself on the great ocean of time, to be borne backwards and forwards as destiny directs; nor is it a bad rule in the world, more than on the road, for life is but the journey of a day.

As we proceeded onwards, I witnessed an

instance of my companion's forbearance, which pleased me. Occasionally he wielded his whip, but never used it, though the sluggish movements of the unwieldy animal, would, in the opinion of many, have warranted the exercise of it; when I had formerly known him, he spared neither whip nor spur, and the heaving chest and mangled sides of the poor horse which he rode, bore cruel testimony to his thoughtlessness. Would it not be good poetical justice, think you, the transmigration of the unfeeling rider's soul, into the body of his suffering beast? However, it is well when enthusiasm supplies the place of compassion, and dread of future punishment teaches us present mercy.

We passed a number of beautiful seats, but in vain I enquired of my companion to whom they belonged, for he knew or cared no more about them, than the horse which he drove; his head indeed was above the clouds, and he looked on green fields and shady groves, as objects which it was sinful to regard. We represent to ourselves a beneficent Deity, yet serve him as though he were a most malevolent one. If pain and pleasure be in any measure, as some suppose, the origin of our different forms of worship, how far must our apprehension of the former transcend our sense of the latter.

I was better able, or more disposed to

answer the questions which he asked me. I had told him that I was just come from London, and that great city has wherewithal to gratify every taste. He heard with pleasure of the numerous churches and chapels which are building, and the many more which are to be built; and he heard with more than pleasure, of the ceaseless labours of the Bible and Missionary Societies, and the daily progress they are making in the conversion of the heathen. "Hasten good Lord," softly ejaculated he, "the coming of that blessed time, when the nations shall be one and the same, and there shall be none to hurt or harm on all your holy mountain."

I do not wonder at the interest which he took in these societies' unwearied, and I have no doubt, well-intended exertions; for on the only occasion that I was present at any of their meetings, I was affected to a degree that I am almost ashamed to acknowledge. However, I believe it was not so much the fascination of eloquence, as of the ladies' faces, radiant as they seemed with benevolence, and the elevating reflection that they were contributing, not to a few miserable earthly wants, but to the eternal happiness of their fellow man. In the beautiful countenances of two young ladies who sat near me, I saw reflected as in a mirror, the pure emotions of their souls; and I gazed on them, I fear longer than

politeness would warrant; but I could not help it, for their kindly hearts bathed with choicer than Olympian due the roses on their cheeks.

We stopped at the little town of Fintona, as well to refresh our horse as ourselves; and leaving it at its oats, went to the church, where a number of people were assembled. We had a sermon, which was followed by a hymn and a prayer. The singing was so indifferent, that I am almost inclined to be of a friend of mine's opinion, that good voices, which are not plenty any where, are particularly rare in Ireland.

Fintona is a thriving town, and has a market for coarse linen, which is well attended. Some years ago the curate was a Dr. Shelton, author of a work called Deism Revealed; I have not read it, but it is said to be a book of considerable merit, and to have excited much interest at its first appearance. One day at table, the late Bishop of London is reported to have asked the Bishop of Clogher, if he knew who the author was. The other replied, "that he did perfectly well, for that he was a curate in his diocese, and had been so upwards of twenty years." "More shame for you," said the English Bishop indignantly, "you should not have allowed such a man to remain a curate for the quarter of the time." It is possible the Irish Prelate thought the shame

of neglecting merit might easily be borne, he shared it with so many; at all events, I have never heard that the poor author was promoted; making of books, is no more the best way of getting on in the church, than it is in life.

Mr. Pockeridge, the contriver of the Harmonica, or musical glasses, was likewise an inhabitant of Fintona, or at least of its neighbourhood. This ingenious, though ill-fated man, perished miserably in a fire, which consumed the house he lived in; but his name will continue as long as there exists a taste for true harmony; for the instrument which he invented, produces sounds so far superior to every other, that without profanation it might be regarded, not as of earth, but of heaven.

On our arrival at my friend's house, I found ready a comfortable dinner; there was actually a feast, where I had almost prepared myself for a famine, not remembering that fasting is popish and idolatrous; to be sure the grace was of most unconscionable length, and as far as the worthy repeater of it was concerned, a dexterous thief might have carried off meat, dishes, and plates, so completely was the good man entranced in his subject, and so fast were his eyes closed. There was some good currant wine at dinner, and the whiskey bottle, warm water and sugar, were set on the table immediately after the cloth was removed.

All this was for me, for my host neither

tasted spirits, wine, nor ale; yet he did not press me the less on that account. I asked him why he did not take a little himself, of what he so strongly recommended to me? "Because I long took too much," replied he, "and a little to punish myself I now take none at all." "But my good friend," I said, "your frame seems quite exhausted, and two or three glasses of wine would nourish you; its an up-hill, as well as steep path you are on, and the fainting heart stands in need of a cordial." "The children of this world," said he, complacently smiling, "are wise in their generation, and remember not that man does not live by bread nor wine, but by the word of God alone."

"Pray," said I, "since you will not drink with me, will you have the goodness to tell me how this extraordinary change has taken place; for in reality, I scarce recognise you. The last time I sat with you at this very table, you chaunted Croppies lie Down, in a voice, that reasonably speaking, might have been heard at the top of that high hill yonder; and had it not been in your own house, would have quarrelled with me, because I would not drink confusion to Papists and Republicans, whom, little akin as they are to each other, you contrived to couple together; by the same token you swore more oaths, than I think I have heard since. Excuse my plain dealing, and

now answer me, and at as much length as you please."

The good man did not, or would not perceive the tone of jocularity with which I was speaking. "All this is true," said he, "and a hundred things more; I was a horse-racer, cock-fighter, and sabbath-breaker, as well as profane swearer, but it pleased my Redeemer, to pluck me like a fire-brand from the fire, which like the furnace seven times heated, I was preparing for myself. As I was one day returning from a hunt, the poor animal which I had driven unmercifully, fell down through sheer weakness, and broke my leg; it might as well have been my neck, and God have mercy on me, into what a place should I not have fallen; yea lower than the grave, even into the Tophet I deserved."

"May be not" said I, "for Heaven is kinder to us than we are to ourselves; 'between the stirrup and the ground, I mercy sought, I mercy found,' was inscribed on he tomb of a greater sinner than you; but you broke your leg you say, I presume you were long confined to your bed, and talked with good people, and read good books?" "I lay upwards of five months," resumed he, "and should be thankful had I even lain till now, for it pleased God to make my bed for me in my illness, and to create a new spirit within me, which like the sun in the firmament, will

I trust shine more and more unto the perfect day."

"I hope so, I said, and that you will never more return to those courses which you so properly reprobate; but a sour aspect is not essential to religion, and I should recommend to you, to proceed quietly on your way, lest reformation become wearisome, and, like the stone of Sisyphus, roll back on itself. Violent things seldom last; love me little and love me long, is an advice in which there is much good sense."

We then walked about the farm which was well cultivated, adorned with hedges and planted with young trees; we visited the garden likewise, which was gay with fruits and flowers, and at this time neither weed nor briar was to be seen. I hope my friend's Methodism will avail him in another world, but however that be, it certainly has benefited him in this.

The little room in which I lay, opened on the parlour where we had dined; there was no occasion to close the shutters, for the window was filled with a large geranium, which shed sweetness on my dreams; I had slept soundly for several hours, when I was awaked by the voices of people, as I thought conversing. I wondered who these wakeful persons could be, for on looking at my watch, I found it wanted some minutes of four; I

gently opened the door therefore, and saw my host with his large Bible open before him, reading with as audible a tone of voice, and in as profound stillness of solitude, as the Mussulman lady read the Alcoran, in the idolatrous, enchanted city of the Arabian Tales. It was the Book of Revelations which he was thus solemnly studying, and he had pen, ink, and paper by his side. I do not doubt but that in consequence of what I had been telling him, he was calculating the exact period of the Milennium, which many people imagine to be at hand, though, were we to judge by the manners and morals of the age, it seems as remote as ever. The Book of Revelations is read by almost all enthusiasts with delight; for it gratifies that disposition to pry into futurity, so natural to man, and agreeably exercises the intellect, benumbed as perhaps it had been, by the sluggishness of folly, and sloth of vice. Still, the conclusions drawn from it have been productive of much harm; and the application of certain passages to the errors of Rome, have added further hatred, to what was too great before. Hatred at least to the full as much as love, is natural to man, and we indulge in it, if I may so speak, *con amore*, when at the same time we can gratify our own malevolent passions, and do, as we regard it, acceptable service to God.

I returned to my bed and slept till eight

o'clock, and after breakfast my host drove me a few miles on my way. On parting, he took a kindly leave of me, and seriously exhorted me to put off the good work no longer, but to take heed to my salvation, while still it was time. "Trust not," said he squeezing my hand, "to your heathen morality, your soft speaking, and swearing no oaths; they will only plunge you in the Slough of Despond as they did Christian before. The world indeed, to continue the allegory, is a very slough of despond, and while it daily becomes more miry, man's confidence in Evangelist unfortunately becomes less."

I had not walked far, when a shower forced me to take shelter in a little cabin. A woman was sitting busily occupied at her wheel; another was in her bed, which, as is customary here, was a little boarded place at the side of the fire. The fire of an Irish cottage, like the sacred fire of the Persians, rarely goes out by night or by day; and possibly this may be the remains of the same superstition; for in days of yore the Irish were among the foremost worshippers of fire; nor is it strange that they should, for the Greeks reverenced the inventor of agriculture as a deity, and in this chill land and damp climate, the discovery of fire was a greater blessing than that of corn. When the coals blazed cheerful on the rude hearth, the dripping savages who crouched round it,

would reverence the kindly heat of the flaming faggot, beyond that of even the sun, which mists and exhalations hid so often from their view, and whose faint and feeble beams seldom passed to them, except through watery clouds.

The poor woman gasped for breath, and smoked as she lay. Asthma is a disease to which the lower classes in this country are particularly liable, as well from the dampness of the climate, as the vegetable nature of their food: by this latter the stomach is weakened, and the lungs become affected, from the sympathy which all the great organs have for each other. In times past, I have often indulged in reveries on the wholesomeness as well as humanity of abstinence from animal food; but woeful experience has destroyed the delusion, and painfully convinces me, that the blood of animals is as necessary to the health, as it is grateful to the taste of man. When nature gave us the teeth of tygers, she intended us to make use of them; she formed us to sever the flesh of animals, to seek in them our food, and alas, to serve them for food in return. It is a horrible thought, but such is the hard condition of our birth. Could we choose, it would be a different one; but we cannot choose: in the language of an Eastern writer, "we are no more than chessmen, who are moved by the will of the player."

One of the most interesting medical books I am acquainted with, is a treatise on the asthma, by Sir John Floyer, written after he was fourscore years of age. Sir John was a great physician, but he could not cure himself; for, from the earliest period to the time that he wrote, he was afflicted with the disease. His preventative and palliative remedies are almost equally beyond the reach of an Irish peasant; the former consisted in the most minute attention to diet and dress, and when, in spite of these precautions, the fit had actually come on, he took strong coffee, at short intervals, until its violence subsided.

I promised to send the poor creature in bed something to smoke, as she did her tobacco, which would, I thought, give her more relief. It is the stramonium which I mean to send her, and which, formerly prescribed in cases of melancholy and madness, is now recommended in asthma. It is one of those vegetable poisons with which nature spreads the fields, but which man has converted to his good: like all other narcotic substances, it diminishes the sensibility of the frame, and induces that cessation of sense and motion, in which sleep consists.

The poor sufferer was full of blessings and thanksgivings; blessings on the kindly shower which had driven me to her door for shelter,

and thanksgiving to the gracious Providence which had sent the shower for her good. Happy instinct of our nature, which converts thus the straw bed of sickness into a couch of kindliest down; and, in suffering and sorrow, rocks us to slumber with the soothing thought, that angels guard our pillow, and that there is a special Providence which watches over us.

I am led to this reflection, not more by the circumstance I have related, than by a passage which awhile ago I read in the "Studies of Nature, by St. Pierre," and which, a little to relieve the wearisomeness of narration, I shallt ranscribe. "About a hundred years ago, a philosopher of his nation, and several others of his countrymen, were wrecked on a desert island, in the Eastern seas. When they were on the very point of perishing, the sea threw upon the shore a number of cocoa nuts, in a state of germination, as if it had been the intention of Providence not only to relieve their present, but to supply their future wants; and to induce them, by this seasonable present, to remain and cultivate the island. But a blessing from heaven, so distinctly marked, had not the power of detaining them there: an inconsiderate desire of procuring women, led them to abandon it, and plunged them into a series of calamities, which few of them

survived. For my part," concludes the amiable relater, " I entertain no doubt, that had they reposed that confidence in Providence which they had reason to do, its care would have conveyed them wives, as before it had sent them cocoa nuts." One would almost be tempted to believe, that this ingenious Frenchman had written the first part seriously, and that some of the numerous wags in which his country abounds, had added the latter, to ridicule a story which, if it be true, is certainly an extraordinary one.

Scarcely had I time to draw breath in Omagh, when I heard the sound of the mail-coach. I had intended walking, at least as far as Newtown Stewart; but, in such weather, the opportunity was too inviting to be missed, and I took a seat to Strabane. There were three other passengers; one was lying asleep in a corner, another was reading; but the third, who I believe is a Scotch officer, was broad awake, and disposed for conversation. He told me that he was a relation of Sir Murray Maxwell's, and, since my arrival in Ireland, he is the only person who has expressed the least sympathy for that unfortunate knight; so completely turned is the tide of opinion, and so strongly is it running against administration, even among those who were lately the loudest in their professions of attachment. But these professions were not to

be taken literally; and dislike to government is the unavoidable consequence of taxation in the extreme. When want comes in at the door, loyalty, like love, goes out at the window.

We entered Newtown Stewart by a new road which runs along the water side. One consequence of this needless change is, that the beautiful view from the hill which overhangs the town, is lost to the traveller. But it has another and greater evil; the mountain road furnished, even in winter, a pleasant and firm walk to foot passengers, who are here by far the most numerous class of travellers. It is now neglected, and they must wade their way as they best can through the mire of the low and swampy road. In a spot between Omagh and Ballygawly, as many thousand cart loads of stones and sand have been thrown, as there were of good instructions into the Slough of Despond; and with pretty nearly the same effect, for it is a slough still, and will be, when they have done all they can.

My fellow-passengers stopped for dinner at Newtown Stewart, and I slowly sauntered on. I had walked about a mile when the coach overtook me, and we drove rapidly along. I was now in scenes of acquaintance, but I had scarcely time to look on them; the hills and dales of my youthful days flew as rapidly past

me, as the days themselves seem now to have done.

We arrived in Strabane at the usual hour, and I again beheld the place of my birth. I beheld too the aged parent to whom I owe that birth. I beheld her with pleasure; but it was pleasure in which there was pain: the bowed down head was stooped still lower; the dim eye was dimmed further; and the weakened limbs trembled more. It has been my lot, whether good or bad, to be a wanderer; amidst the scenes of her youth, she has grown old; never has she changed, nor perhaps wished to change her place. But the mountains which bounded her narrow horrizon could not shut her out from care. It has followed her over them, and made her die a hundred times in the loss of those she loved. Could we enter the heart, and read its secret thoughts, she dies perhaps further, as every green tree, and field, and bush, reminds her of the years that are flown. The daisied bank opposite her garden is the same on which, in happy infancy, she gathered wild flowers; and the setting sun which sheds lustre on her windows, lighted up in this very room her opening years and blooming hopes. To cheerless age, the earth no longer pours forth flowers; and neither rising nor setting sun can warm with joy the languid heart, on which is the chill of more than threescore

and fourteen years. "The days of our years," saith Moses, "are threescore and ten; and if by reason of strength they are fourscore, yet is their strength labour and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we flee away."

LETTER XV.

Strabane.

I HAVE now been better than a week in Strabane, and it is time therefore that I should write. Yet little have I to tell, except that I have seen a few old acquaintances, visited my old walks, and that I have found every thing changed, and changed for the worse. Since I was last here, this town and neighbourhood have been visited by two almost of the heaviest calamities which can befal human beings. Fever and famine have been let loose, and it is hard to say which has destroyed the most.

It would be too much to assert that the latter caused the former; but it undoubtedly was the cause of its wide diffusion. Hords of wandering beggars, impelled by the cravings of hunger, carried the distemper from door to door; and, from their wretched habiliments, wafted contagion far and wide. Almost the entire mountain population, literally speaking, took up their beds and walked; and, with their diseased blankets wrapped round them, sought, in the low lands, the succour which charity could not give, but at the hazard of life.

Irish usages have always opened a ready way to the beggar. The most holy men, says one of their laws, were remarkable for hospitality; and the Gospel commands us to receive the sojourner, to entertain him, and to relieve his wants. Even in ordinary times, the poor claim charity as a matter less of favor than of right; and approach the rich man's door, almost with the freedom of an inmate; but they now, in frightful numbers, besieged every house, and forced their way into kitchens, parlours, and even rooms the most remote.

Those who condemn the English system of poor laws, would have here found reason to change their opinion; and have beheld the evils inseparable from leaving our fellow men to seek in infirmity and old age that bread, which, were society constructed as it ought to be, should be wanting to none. The immediate evil was the rapid propagation of the fever, which, almost at the same instant, shewed itself in the town and country, the hill and valley, — the lord's castle, — the tradesman's house, — and the poor man's cabin. I do not understand, however, that its malignity was much greater than on former occasions; though its diffusion so out-baffled all calculation, and could only be paralleled in those barbarous times, when battle and murder spread havoc over the land, and pes-

tilence gathered the gleanings of those whom they had spared.

It has been remarked, that a greater number of youths than men, and of men than old men, were attacked with the disorder. It is perhaps but just in nature, as she diminishes our capability of pleasure, to diminish likewise our susceptibility of disease; but what does not seem so just, more women were affected than men. To make amends, a much smaller number of them died. Your sex are dexterous at eluding disorder, by yielding to it; as the storm which rages harmless over the bending willow, uproots the sturdy oak.

Another remarkable feature of the disease was, that the mortality was much greater in the higher than lower classes; and not only was the termination more generally fatal, but it took place at a much earlier period. "There is a sore evil," saith Solomon, "which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt." Intemperance in eating and drinking begets diseases, multiplied as the hydra's heads, and aggravates those which it does not beget. I do not vaunt of the sobriety of my poorer countrymen; but such, for some time before, had been their condition, that they could not obtain the whiskey which they loved.

Besides this compulsatory abstinence, other reasons may be assigned for the more frequent

recovery of the poor. Some of them you may think not very becoming in me, but I shall give them nevertheless; for, as some wise man of old said, "I pursue truth, and must follow where she leads." The poor man seldom took any medicine, and still seldomer had a doctor; except the nature to which he owed his existence be reckoned such, and by whose assistance he was enabled, when the disorder had spent its violence, to throw it off by some salutary discharge. I have heard several instances of people of this description, passing sixteen or eighteen days in a kind of pleasing stupor, and all at once awakening with an inclination for food, and a perfect recollection of their situation.

But the abundance of the rich would not allow him to sleep. He had two or three physicians, and sometimes more; he was harrassed by frequent questions, and tormented by various medicines and applications. Nature was interfered with in her operations, and, unacquainted, as in nine cases out of ten we are, with her intentions, they were very likely, in nearly the same proportion, counteracted. Because perspiration sometimes accompanies the crisis of a fever, solutions of a strong antimonial preparation were given, which alike nauseated the stomach, and racked the frame. Perspiration did indeed follow, but it was oftener than otherwise the dew of death; for

as was well remarked by the most ancient of physicians, perspiration occurring in a fever is bad, because it protracts the disease, and denotes debility.

Nor were the vigilant doctors satisfied with harrassing their poor patient's stomach, but they scarcely or never failed to clap a large blister to his back or breast, which added to his irritation, and dissipated, if I may so speak, the cloud of heaviness in which nature, kinder to him than they were, would have sheltered him as it were from himself. This blistering is abominable, but it is indispensible in almost every disease here; and woe be to the worthless physician who allows his patient to slip through his fingers into another world, without imprinting on his back this mark of having passed through his hands. The more the practice is unsuccessful, the more it is persisted in, as Sangrado bled and drenched with warm water, the faster his patients died. Has he been blistered? is the first question asked by each officious intermedler; and should the reply, which rarely occurs, be that he has not, hands and eyes are raised in astonishment, that any one should be allowed to die, while there was a Spanish fly left remaining to save him.

But beside the *physical* disadvantages of their condition, the rich have to encounter still more formidable moral ones. The poor

man lives only in the present, and, occupied with his daily wants, suffers little from evils that are imaginary or remote. He has scarcely any apprehension of the fever, for scarcely has he leisure to think of it, and without scruple he goes in its way. My barber tells me that he shaved without fear, both the living and the dead; he merely took a pinch of snuff before entering the room, and drank a glass of whiskey if it was offered to him. Tobacco, in every form, has been frequently mentioned as a means of guarding against contagion; and it is possible, by diminishing sensibility, it renders us less liable to its operation, but it is in no measure an antidote, as some foolishly suppose.

But when at length the poor man is overtaken with the disorder, he sinks quietly on his bed, not greatly concerned that he has so long a respite from the labour, which he regards as the heaviest of evils; and with scarce a fearful emotion awaits the event. How different are the mind's workings in the more cultivated man! He is assailed by disease on disease, for the worst of diseases is the fear of death. He weighs circumstances, and calculates probabilities; he dives into the future, and throws his thoughts backward to the past, and if he happens to be of a desponding disposition, he is almost certain not to recover. Despair of recovery almost excludes recovery;

the instance of my worthy friend near Coote-hill is not a solitary one, for I know many of a similar kind. So many, that I almost regard the dread of death we so frequently witness, as less a natural than an artificial feeling; or at all events so dependent on comfort of condition, as in a great measure to counterbalance the discomforts of poverty, and to be only one of those means, by which Nature, who, amidst all her caprices, loves equality, holds in nearly equal balance the fortunes of men.

In consequence, I do not doubt, of a more judicious treatment, the mortality was not so great in this town as elsewhere; yet still a number of the respectable inhabitants died. Almost a stranger as I am in my native land, I can scarcely be said to have known any of them except one; but him I did well know, and have passed many social hours in his company, at the house of a common friend, who too is lost to me, though not by death. For some time before his fatal illness, this deserving young man had been particularly dispirited, in consequence of a vexatious business, in which the hatred of an enemy had involved him; and from the first moment, he said he knew he should die. He died on an early day of the disorder, and left a sister and aged mother to bewail his loss. He was a a most excellent brother and son; a character

which I rejoice to say is not an uncommon one in Ireland.

Another instance of the melancholy influence of the desponding passions occurred in the case of a young lawyer, who resided a few miles from the town. A short time before he was attacked by the fever, an action had been brought against him for a breach of promise of marriage, and damages were given to the amount of some hundred pounds. He was not rich, but it is probable that it was not so much the loss of money, as the mortification of defeat, which preyed on his mind. However that be, he raved incessantly of the verdict; he mimicked the taking of notes, examined and cross-examined witnesses, addressed the judge and jury, and wrought himself so powerfully by these illusions of the imagination, that he could only be retained in bed by the force of several men.

The treatment of fever, were it as it ought to be, is as simple as the art of man has rendered it complex. From the very onset Nature deprives us of all appetite, and imparts to us a desire for cold water and cool air; and we should therefore be freely indulged in both. Medicine may be dispensed with, but coolness, beyond even cleanliness, is indispensible; and I once saw the most sensible benefit derived from the simple circumstance of changing the pillow. Every two or three

hours it was tossed out of the window, and allowed to remain in the open air until it was wanted again. The patient took no other medicines than small and repeated doses of Epsom salts; and towards the decline of the disorder, a little wine and water. Of all stimulants in fever, wine is the most eligible, for it has the advantage of being alike grateful to the palate and stomach; but still it should be administered with great caution, for the destructive practice of giving it in large quantities, which prevailed some years ago, caused, I am persuaded, the loss of many hundreds of valuable lives. I remember with horror, a physician once boasting that, by sheer dint of brandy, he had kept a patient living two days longer than he should otherwise have done, and that but for his own obstinacy, he would have been saved altogether; for it seems, a few hours before death, the poor man had put aside the empoisoned cup, as in all probability it was, and indignantly exclaimed, "What, Doctor, would you send me drunk into the presence of my God."

The author of this brutal practice was a drunken Scotch madman, who having sagaciously discovered that sickness merely consisted in weakness, or over strength, reduced medicine to the simple business of bleeding down the strong, and intoxicating up the weak; as the fencing-master

in one of Moliere's plays tells his pupil, that the whole secret of fencing consists in giving as many thrusts as he can, and not getting any.

By the method of treatment, or rather by the deference to the dictates of nature I have mentioned, forty-nine out of fifty persons of sound constitutions, will pass in safety through a fever, and have a favourable crisis about the fourteenth day. This crisis not unfrequently is accompanied with a mild perspiration, and sometimes by a bleeding from the nose, and even ears; and it is curious to remark, that it is often preceded by a state of stupor resembling death, as if nature must die within us, to be quickened anew into life.

Some years ago a young medical gentleman in London lay in this death-like trance, and his nurse took the opportunity of laying her hands on such matters as were within her reach. In a particular manner a pair of gold sleeve-buttons, which he wore, tempted her avarice, and without giving herself the trouble of undoing them, she tore them away from the shirt. "Curse you," said the unfeeling wretch, "I have had trouble enough with you these thirteen long nights, but it is nearly over now." She was wrong, for it was only beginning. The young man, though unable to speak or even to move, was perfectly aware of what she had said and done. He recovered,

and took care to give her such a character as drove her from a profession to which she was a disgrace, and which, in a city like London, is so important a one.

It is another remarkable circumstance in fever, that there is something in its nature which inclines it to be of a certain duration; and that its termination, whether in life or death, happens at certain periods, rather than at others. These periods are called the critical days, carefully marked by Hippocrates and other ancient physicians, and also by many modern ones. They are the seventh, ninth, eleventh, fourteenth, and seventeenth days; but a great physician has remarked, that in this climate fever rarely terminates before the eleventh, and when it does, it is almost always fatally.

Death's prognostics are less equivocal than those of life, and strike the most careless observer. There is extreme weakness of the pulse and coldness of the extremities; great irregularity of the voluntary motions depending on their debility, and great weakness of the intellectual operations. But the awful and almost certain precursor of dissolution, is the entire alteration of countenance and feature; the eye is sunken, the nose pointed, the cheeks colourless, and the whole visage lengthened. The frame is all working, and the feeble emaciated fingers are busied in

gathering from the bed clothes imaginary flowers, and scattering them in fanciful profusion around.

I never knew an instance of a man recover who had those appearances, but I know a woman, a near relation of my own, who is living and had them all. She had, besides, faint convulsions, and so near seemed her departure, that her relations retired from the room until all should be over. Lamentation for her death was perhaps the cause of her life; the room was left almost empty, the windows were thrown open, and the fire, happily in the confusion of distress unattended to, died away. That very night she had a few hours of uninterrupted sleep, and her recovery from thence forward, though slowly, proceeded surely.

It is pleasing, amidst the disfigurements, and they are many, of nature, to observe traces of moral beauty, as we behold violets lurking beneath briars and thorns. It is woman who suckles and tends us in infancy. It is she also who tends us in sickness and suffering; and when sickness and suffering, as well as joy and sorrow, are for ever over, it is she who dresses us for the coffin, as before she had dressed us at birth. It is fitting that the diseases should be less fatal to her, to which so much more than man she is exposed; that her feet should be seared

against the burning ploughshares, over which, in the virtue of her nature, she walks undaunted, and that she should come from the fiery furnace purified, and not consumed.

LETTER XVI.

Strabane.

I SHOULD never advise him who quits in early life the place of his birth, to come back in matured age in expectation of enjoyment; if he does, and has but ordinary sensibility, he will be disappointed. If such a hope has been his solace in a strange land, I pity him, for it will fail him the moment his heel touches his native earth. The scenes of his youth he may return to, but his youthful joys, like his youthful years, will return no more; like luminous vapours which mislead the benighted traveller, they shine on him from afar, only to plunge him as he approaches in darker gloom.

At least it is so with me; these high hills which recall to my remembrance my receding years in morning's brightness, throw evening's lengthening shadows on my coming ones, and not these high hills only, but every green field and low bush, and wide street and narrow lane, and lone house, revives some recollection, and haunts me with the ghost of former days. If I walk upwards, I pass

the ancient meeting-house where I was early taught to look to heaven as a habitation, and to regard as nothing this vain and transitory world; if I go downwards I see the green lane, where still stands the deserted school-room, to which, with shining morning face, I trudged not unwillingly to school; and if I stand still, I have full in view the market-house, where I played a thousand times with companions, not one of whom remains.

A few are gone to America, but by far the greater number are dead. Many by ship-wreck and battle, many more by sickness, and some no doubt by sorrow; a disease which, though inserted in no bill of mortality, kills more than we are aware. I walk therefore nearly as much alone as I should in the wilds of America, and somewhat I have of their solitariness too. Commerce, as well as riches, seems to have taken its flight; and in these very streets, where not many years back was all the bustle of business, I wander up and down almost as undisturbed as in the fields.

But the most fruitful ground for meditation is the Square, as it is called, though for no reason on earth that I know of, as it sets all form at defiance. This Square was inhabited once by a numerous gentry, social, hospitable and gay; but these have almost all passed away, and the houses, where so oft was heard

the sounds of merriment and laughter, are fallen in ruins or mouldering in decay. Bear with me, I pray you, while I linger a few moments among them. I do not live here in the present, but in the future and the past; and like some moody genii of an Arabian tale, I avoid as much as I can the abodes of men, and haunt church-yards, deserted places, and lone walls. I was born here, the bones of my fathers here moulder, and when time to me shall be no longer, my bones I trust shall here moulder with theirs; bear with me therefore again I pray.

The longest thing that I recollect was the venerable old rector, who resided in one of those ruined houses, and, as if it were only yesterday, I see him now before me, as with large grizzle wig, and gold-headed cane to prop his tottering steps, he walked to his little rural church. Often and often have I followed him, and hearkened in reverence greater than I have hearkened since, to preachers of greater name. Nor did I listen to his old clerk with much less delight; his contortions of countenance was a subject of merriment to many, but it was none to me, for my whole soul was in his song. His brother was the sexton, and such is the force of custom, that he dug the poor creature's grave, and possibly whistled over it, with the same unconcern that he had dug and whistled over so many

before. When I was here last the sexton himself underwent the common lot, and such is the insensibility of mankind, that many jokes were passed on that fruitful subject of village merriment, the digging of the grave-digger's grave.

The church-yard is romantically situated beneath a green hill, and so soothing is the scene, that there are times when it is not unpleasing to me to look down on the quiet dead, in their grass-grown habitations, and when I could almost be contented to lay me down and be one of them. An indecent custom, however, prevails, of putting clothes to dry on the gate and walls, which it is extraordinary should be allowed, or indeed desired, for the hill above, with its sparkling brook, seems Nature's own bleach-green.

The walk leading up to the church is prettily planted with laburnums and other trees and shrubs. Some years ago it was widened and extended back to the wall, and this alteration was attended with circumstances almost sickening to relate. The tombs were opened, and the hillocks of green earth were cleared away; the coffins were uprooted, and poor decaying mortality was borne from the spot, where it had counted to rest for ever, to find in remote corners its eternal bed. No purpose of ornament or improvement could compensate for this outrage on the natural feelings

of man. It is the instinctive hope of his heart, and is one of his props under the load of life, that his body, which when his soul is joined to it knows so little quiet, should find in the grave everlasting rest. Besides, the adornment of a church-yard seems of very doubtful propriety, for no matter how we feel in moments of enthusiasm or despondence; death in our ordinary state is so abhorrent to us, that we wonder, or are angry even, to see nature flourish amidst the wreck of man.

Though the church-yard is spacious and extensive, the church is a small one. It was built not many years after the grand rebellion; but it has lately been greatly improved, and it would now be a neat church, were it not for a stove, which most unaccountably is planted in the centre of the great aisle, and which, however pleasing by its warmth, is most offensive to the eye. Directly opposite the pulpit is a seat with crimson canopy and furniture, in which the chief magistrate of our little community sits in rural state. He is called the provost, for we are you know originally a Scottish people, and we still retain several of their homely appellations, little favourable as they now are to respect. It is in truth unaccountable the prepossession of names, and how unfortunate in this respect are Scotch ones. The most determined novel reader would probably have little sympathy

with the tender sorrows of a Jock or a Moggy; nor could we, perhaps by any effort, regard a provost with equal reverence as a mayor.

At no great distance from the church, were standing not many years ago, the ruins of a house, which is said to have been the birth-place of the only remarkable man which this town has produced. He was no less august a personage, than the late general Carleton, earl of Dorchester, and governor of Canada; and it is rather a curious circumstance, that he who defended, and he who attacked this important province, were born within a few miles of each other. General Montgomery, his formidable, though unsuccessful antagonist, was a native of Conway, a village a short distance from this; but of this gallant general, the oldest person living here has no recollection. General Carleton is equally unknown, and no one remembers more than to have heard, that he was born in the house I have mentioned, and that his father was the collector of excise. It is possible, therefore, that this gentleman's residence here was only temporary, and that his son stands in no other relation to Strabane, than Sterne does to Clonmel, by being accidentally born in the barracks. Had General Carleton been defeated, or turned traitor as General Arnold did, we should in all likeli-

hood have disowned him, but as he is a great man we claim him for our own.

Colonel Montgomery, a brother of the General's, represented for many years the neighbouring county of Donegal in the Irish parliament, and was at least a consistent politician, for he was never known to give a vote in favour of any measure proposed by any administration. This admirable virtue, as it was reckoned, endeared him wonderfully to his constituents, and compensated for the failings of his private life. I saw him once when I was a boy; it was at the issue of a contested election, and he was triumphantly chairing through the streets; a sterner or less prepossessing countenance can scarcely be imagined, and it is not exaggeration to compare the colour of his face to saffron, or to the orange ribbons with which his person and chair were so plentifully adorned.

He was a man of great courage, which as he had left the army in disgust, was exerted in repeated duels; and his last one in a particular manner, he fought at his ease, for he was so infirm, that he was obliged to be seated in a chair. Even in the hour of death, his courage it would seem did not forsake him, though it ran a wilder career than Don Quixote's, when he attacked the windmills. It is reported, that just departing, he called with loud voice for his sword to keep off the

grissly terror, against whom sword and spear are lifted in vain. It is not impossible, but that in the frenzy of disorder, some casual expression might have been let drop, which ignorant wonder would magnify into this. In Colonel Montgomery, courage was so instinctive, that even when his heart fluttered in dissolution, every fibre would swell in resistance, as Charles of Sweden when struck from the fatal cannon, half drew from the scabbard his unavailing sword.

To the fame of military greatness, the next praise seems awarded to literary merit, and here again Strabane is fortunate, for not only has it produced a warrior, but an author too. Much, however, as I reverence his memory, I cannot so far wrong my conscience as to say, that he was a great one; but he was better, for he was a most virtuous and excellent man; his name was Crawford, and for many years he was the presbyterian clergyman of the congregation here, where he was respected to a degree that no one has ever been since; nor was this respect confined to those of his own persuasion, but extended to all religions, and all descriptions of people. Rank could not command, nor riches purchase, the unsought reverence which every where followed the footsteps of this pious and good man; in whose presence neither immorality, indecency, nor even levity dared to

shew itself. Doctor Johnson was gratified that a gentleman in telling him a story, apologised for some light matters that made a part of it but in the presence of Mr. Crawford, no one would have ventured to tell a story that required an apology.

He was brother to the late Dr. Adair Crawford of Lincoln's-Inn Fields, and when I went first to London, he gave me an introduction to that benevolent and deservedly celebrated man. Young as I then was, he had a liking for me, and I am not sure but that in part it is owing to his suggestions that I am what I now am.

As an author, his worthy brother appears to greatest advantage in his translation of Turretine, a Swiss or German clergyman, who wrote on the Being and Attributes of God; and often have I encountered my reverend friend's labours in Encyclopædias and other compilations, without a word of acknowledgment to him. He is the author likewise of Strictures on Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son, which I have never seen, but I presume they are such as would proceed from a country clergyman of unbending morality and little practice in the ways of life. I cannot altogether defend the noble writer, but surely he has met with harsher treatment than he deserved. A man of talents he unquestionably was, and a statesman of no

ordinary kind; at all events there never has been such a chief governor in Ireland since, and the kindness which an illiberal and mistaken system would not allow him to show to the country, on no occasion after his return to England did he fail to show to individuals belonging to it.

Mr. Crawford's longest work was a History of Ireland, in a series of letters addressed to a Doctor Hamilton, a native of this neighbourhood, though long settled as a physician in London, where he died. Letters seem an ill-chosen and injudicious manner of writing history; and besides, my worthy pastor's are as short and as unpleasantly interrupted by the everlasting recurrence of addressing and taking leave, as if they had depended on the post. But the work is the production of a manly, as well as virtuous mind, and displays in every page an ardent love of freedom, and that zeal for parliamentary reform which, whether wisely or foolishly, prevailed at that time in Ireland as much as it now does in England. The following is the commencement of his first letter, and is dated April 1782.

"The God of Nature has distinguished our country with a variety of his choicest blessings. He has given us a fruitful soil, a happy temperature of climate, and advantages most favourable to extensive commerce. In

the virtues of our inhabitants his kindness has been as eminently displayed. But the hand of power has deeply injured us, in respect to that liberty which is one of the first constituents of human happiness. Our best inheritance, our dearest rights have been violated. You will rejoice in the favourable change which has lately taken place in our situation. The Genius of Liberty has dispersed the darkness that covered our political horizon, and opened to us the brightest prospect that ever was presented to any people."

Historians, like poets, indulge at times in predictions of greatness and happiness; how Mr. Crawford's have been fulfilled it is not necessary to say. That so Christian a man as he truly and unaffectedly was, should have taken so deep an interest in the passing transactions of this fleeting and unsatisfactory world, would appear strange to me, did I not consider that we are tied down as Gulliver was, by a thousand almost imperceptible cords; and though, like him, we may raise our heads a little upwards, our bodies are firmly bound to the earth. Even I myself, who, when I meditate on the nothingness of the world, think it a matter of little consequence, whether I live under a Turkish or an English government, could scarcely a few weeks ago restrain my impatience, to learn

the state of the Westminster poll. We reason as philosophers, but we feel and act as men.

Before taking leave of my friend as an historian, it is but justice to him to say, that he is the first Protestant writer who has placed the hardships and distress of the ill-fated Catholics in their proper point of view, and clearly has he shown, that grievous as were at times their faults, they were on the whole more sinned against than sinning.

He never afterwards appeared before the public as an author, but he was not the more idle on that account, for in my time he was a most voluminous writer of sermons. On one occasion I recollect calling on him in his library, where he spent the greatest part of his time; his countenance was radiant with pleasure, whether of satisfied authorship or of unmixed benevolence, it is not for me to decide. "Congratulate me," said he, throwing down his pen, "that I have at last, which I never expected to do, finished the greatest labour of my life; and that whenever it seems fitting to my Maker, with good old Simeon, I can say, Lord now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

The labour that he spoke of was truly a Herculean one, for it was a series of Sermons on the Evidences of the Christian Religion, which, moderately speaking, would have made

a dozen of folio volumes. It had cost him better than seven years to compose them, he said, and he flattered himself, I well recollect his words, that he had made use of some strong and original arguments, which infidelity would not readily answer. What answer infidelity would have given in writing I know not, but I am sure it would not have been bold enough to have answered him by word of mouth. Good man! he offered me the reading of them, but his writing was so cramp and illegible, that they would have been unintelligible to me. Besides, I did not stand in need of his strong and original arguments. I had no more doubt of the truth of Christianity, than that the sun was made to give light by day, and the moon by night; the bright star of Christian knowledge had shone on my cradle, and I rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

My kindly friend, like Milton, had been a a schoolmaster in early life, and, though not so poetical, was to the full as learned and abstemious as he. He was by far the best classical scholar I ever knew, and Euripides was only less familiar to him than the Bible; he scarcely ever tasted ale, wine, or spirits, and his only relaxation was the tea-table, and hearing his daughter play on the piano-forte. Willing, very likely, to pay court to him, I one evening requested the young lady to

favour me with, " I know that my Redeemer liveth;" and while she played, the happy father sat with clasped hands and eyes upraised to Heaven. Being thus successful in my first essay, I was proceeding to call on her further, but he would not allow her to proceed. " Have done, child," said he; " after those heavenly sounds, the piano must not be profaned with any unhallowed tune." Scarcely have I ever been at an oratorio that this good man did not rise to my mind, and I could not help thinking how shocked he would be, were he living, and to hear sacred and profane music jumbled together, like the gods and mortals in Homer's Iliad, and " Tubal's Lyre," following the " Death of Nelson," and brought up by " Sweet Bird."

He had indeed a too sensitive delicacy, which, though no one dared smile at in his presence, was oftentimes smiled at behind his back. He reformed his daughter's music-books in a manner which, as he was less conversant with songs than sermons, was in truth not a little ridiculous. Solicitous to preserve her mind in the most uncontaminated purity, he struck out every expression and word, which, even by inference, could be thought to sully it, and sometimes he was not very happy in his substitutions. But my heart smites me as I write of these things; happy are they

whose only failings, as his were, are on the side of virtue.

This excellent man did not die in Strabane, which he loved. Unable, from the scantiness of his income, to put his children properly forward in the world, he was indebted for this and many other acts of kindness, to a sister of his wife's who lived with him. This lady was a native of a different part of the kingdom, where she was desirous they should reside; and though poor, Mr. Crawford long resisted, he at length reluctantly complied. The sorrow with which he took leave of a congregation, by whom he was so much loved and honoured, could only be less than that with which we take leave of life. Tears choaked his utterance, as in vain he strove to address them, nor was there I believe a dry eye in the meeting-house. "My sister," said he, as well as he could articulate, "tells me that my removal will add years to her life, and I shall comply were it even to take years from mine."

That his removal did take years from his life, it would be presumptuous to say, but it is certain, they were afterwards few only and full of trouble. He died when he was sixty years old,

"And, to add greater honours to his age
Than man could give him, he died fearing God."

Well for him it was that he was thus summoned, for he would only have lived to see his family forsaken almost of every earthly good. The daughter for whose happiness, here and hereafter, he was so solicitous, is now with her husband and children a cheerless wanderer in America, nearly destitute I fear of the necessaries of life. A son sailed for the West Indies, but as the vessel was never heard of, it must have foundered at sea. His wife died of the most excruciating tortures from a cancer, which corroded even to the heart's blood. And the sister, the benefactress, the haughty lady, looked up to, uncontradicted, admired; lived to witness all these sad changes, to survive all her friends as well as comforts, and by a strange vicissitude in her affairs, with the cause of which I am unacquainted, to want the assistance which she had so often given, and to die, if not in poverty, at least in dependence.

Nor has fortune, which proved thus unkind to the good man's family, spared even the roof under which he dwelt. His house is now a barrack, his study a guard-room, and the windows which so often I have seen fragrant with the rose and geranium, I yesterday saw shattered and broken, hung with belts and pouches, and soldiers' coarse shirts. It is only part of a large mansion, which often in times past put me in mind of Buckingham

House, or rather Buckingham House put me in mind of it. The other part has lately been fitted up as a private dwelling, and the mobbled house only looks the more hideous for this. It may be compared, as the ill-fated land to which it belongs not unaptly has been, to a beautiful woman well-dressed to the middle, but her limbs shrunk in poverty, and covered with rags.

This noble pile, as once it was, was built by a gentleman of large fortune, but was never inhabited by him; for it is still a tale that is told, that his proud and vain-glorious wife would not sleep a single night in the mean hovel, as she scornfully termed it. It deserves well to be told, that she lived to suffer the punishment of her folly, in the person of her favourite son. Still more thoughtless and extravagant than herself, he wasted his great possessions, and he, whose mother this magnificent house would not satisfy, passed the latter years of his life in a confined and narrow chamber, on the debtors' side of Omagh gaol.

> "You see we are not all alone unhappy.
> This wide and universal theatre
> Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
> Wherein we play."

I shall tell you one story more, and then be done. I shall compress it too, for it is

but a common one, and I have already I fear been too long. Nearly opposite to the house where I write, is a small one which belonged to a widow lady, with whose children I may say I was reared. The family were then in comfortable circumstances, entirely owing to the exertions of the eldest son. At his father's death he was very young, but his understanding was riper than his years. He laboured with unceasing industry to make himself acquainted with the details of a very complicated business, and in no long time became capable of conducting it. To this sacred duty he devoted his whole soul, and for the sake of his widowed mother, neglected various opportunities of establishing himself in life. What to the young heart was still harder, he gave up a young woman to whom he was attached, and who he had reason to suppose was attached to him in return. With fortitude that never altered, he saw her give her hand to another, and in the ennobling reflection that he thus discharged his duty to a helpless parent, and her still more helpless family, he had, I trust, a pleasure purer than even love itself can bestow.

In language, the justness of which my heart recognises, he was shortly called to his reward; for, not long after, he was attacked with a violent illness, which, in a few days, deprived his family of his valuable life. The

mother's grief was beyond expression, and embittered and shortened her days. The helpless shake of the head, with which she accosted me the last time I ever saw her, was the shake of sorrow rather than of time. Her other children were still too young to be of assistance to her; and, bereft of the stay of her support, business declined, and at length entirely left her. About this time a small legacy was bequeathed to her by a brother of her deceased husband's. This gentleman had served with credit in the American war, as an officer of marines, and the circumstances under which he obtained his commission are deserving of being told.

Little as you know of Ireland, you must have read or heard of the siege of Derry, by King James. Though betrayed by the governor, and deserted by the garrison, the gallant citizens shut their gates against the enraged monarch, and his numerous army; and defended themselves with a constancy and resolution which scarcely ever have been excelled. Nor had they the enemy without alone to contend with, but the more formidable one of famine within. The besiegers were in possession of all the adjacent country; and, to prevent relief from coming by sea, they threw a strong chain or boom across the narrowest part of the river, and planted batteries at each end.

The siege had now lasted better than three months, and the unfortunate citizens experienced the extremity of distress. They were forced to subsist on dogs and cats, and animals of a still more loathsome kind; and even this resource at length failed them, and they were without food almost for two days. Bereft as it seemed of succour upon earth, they looked for it from heaven. They left the ramparts, and crowded to the church, where Walker, their intrepid leader, mounted the pulpit, and in the enthusiasm of religious hope, blessed them, and exclaimed that the God of their fathers who had fed them all their life long, would redeem them from their present misery, and again feed them that very day. Scarcely were the words spoken, when a loud cry from one of the towers announced that relief was at hand. Three ships were seen, at a distance, sailing up the river; and the emaciated inhabitants crowded to the walls, to await the result of an event which was to rescue them from misery unutterable, or to extinguish the last gleam of hope. A frigate led the way, and the two vessels which followed were victuallers. As they advanced, the enemy's batteries played incessantly on them; and one of the victuallers, which now occupied the foremost station, came with violence against the boom. It broke, and the shouts of thousands who

were ready to perish, hailed, with frantic joy, the almost miraculous relief. That very night, King James decamped with his army, and ever after was pursued by disaster on disaster, until he lost his lesser kingdom, as before he had lost his greater one.

Captain Rankin, the marine officer I have mentioned, was a descendant of the master of the Triumphant victualler; and it was in consequence of a memorial, stating this descent, that he had got his commission. Well as he was deserving of this, or even of a higher act of kindness, he was long of obtaining it; and at this moment I have some of his letters before me, in which he relates, with touching simplicity, the delays and vexations he had to endure. Though sixty years are not elapsed since they were written, it is curious and almost awful to look on them. They desire so many remembrances to persons, whose names are now only to be found on tomb-stones; and in form, colour, and hand-writing, are so different from letters of the present day, that they almost seem to come themselves from the tomb.

In one of them he gives a long account of the festivities and rejoicings in the city of London, on the occasion of the first visit paid to it by the young and beautiful queen, as he terms our present one. The young and beautiful queen! Could a dagger plunged in her

bosom wound her deeper than these words sounded in her ears would now do. When she thinks on that visit and her late one! When she calls to mind the gorgeous groups who, in antique array, and with quaint device, then welcomed and congratulated her, and who, like their own pageant, have passed for ever away; and remembers the assembled thousands who surrounded her chariot wheels rejoicing, and who, like the insects they passed over, are long crushed by the chariot wheels of Time! When she compares these spontaneous and heart greetings of her contemporaries, with the mouth and knee reverence of a generation to which she is unknown; and the houses once thronged to the very tops, with the silent streets through which she lately passed, and where no one said "God bless her;" great as is her venerable body's anguish, how little is it to the anguish of her soul.

By means of this well-timed legacy, one of the family commenced business as a watchmaker in this town. Innocent, good hearted, and good humoured young man! companion of my infancy, — friend of my youth! — How sorry, when for the first time we parted; and how happy to meet again in Liverpool, when I passed through on my first eventful journey. He too was carried off when still young; and as Cæsar wished his to be, his death was

unexpected and unforeseen. Sitting in an easy chair, jesting as he was wont to do with those around him, he leaned his head backwards, and died as placidly as he had lived.

The remainder of the family established themselves in an inn at Omagh; and for some years they succeeded as well as could be expected, with people whose capital unfortunately was small, and who in consequence, were obliged to contract considerable debts. Upon one occasion I stopped a few days with them, and I wish those who associate want of cleanliness and comfort, with an Irish inn, had seen this one. Little doubt but that those poor people would in time have overcome their difficulties, had they remained where they were; but a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who was endeavouring to bring forward a small town on his own estate, prevailed on them by his importunities to remove there.

They took the inn, and some land, at an extravagant rent, and as little or no business was done, they soon fell into arrears. No allowance, as in all justice there ought to have been, was made for the circumstances under which they had taken the house and farm; their goods were auctioned by the sheriff, and with the wreck of their little fortune, they quitted some months ago this inauspicious

land, and went to America. They took shipping at Derry, and as they sailed down the river, and looked back on the city which their ancestor had so gallantly relieved; if they shook with indignation the dust of Ireland from their feet, and renounced all affection to a country which had driven them so ungratefully forth, could we wonder or greatly condemn.

We cannot all be descended from heroes, but thousands yearly leave this, under circumstances in every other respect the same. Borne down by poverty and oppression, they carry their industry, talents and energy, to a distant and happier land, and never think of the one they have quitted but with loathing, and of its government, with a feeling, for which hatred is but a feeble word.

Of late years the passage has been rendered more difficult and expensive than it was formerly, but the only result has been, to keep at home the very worthless and poor; while the young, the enterprising, and those who have a little money, continue to go; by a perverse alchymy we retain the dross, and throw the precious metal away. Our arrangements must be different, or in no long time the choicest of the population will be gone, and the loss will be felt in more ways than I have leisure, or choose to relate. But our great

ones are heedless of these things, and occupied with their own pleasures and concerns, look, like the gods of Epicurus, with unconcern on the woes which they do not share.

LETTER XVII.

Strabane.

I AM no longer a stranger, but a dweller here. I have received and returned all my visits; welcomes and congratulations are ended, and life flows in its usual muddy stream. It is a curious contrast, the quietness of my present, and the bustle of my late abode; there life was a perpetual whirlpool, though bubbles only broke on its surface, and its frothing circles attracted nothing but feathers and straws. Here it is a grass-grown lake, which stagnates by its own stillness.

I read, I walk, I sleep, and then I read, and walk, and sleep again. My books are but few and not well chosen, but the walks are numerous, and happily they are beautiful ones; the country at this delightful season is as beautiful, as at all other times it is sublime.

The mountain which rises almost directly above the town, is both one and the other; its heathy top seems the everlasting abode of barrenness, while cultivation sits smiling on its side. There is a current prophecy, that at some time or other this mountain will burst

and deluge the town with the pent up waters in its bosom; and this is a misfortune which heretofore has often happened, if we are to credit village report. In this land of rivers and floods, water is represented as the grand agent almost of every ill, and the fire that burns, and the flame that kindles, is regarded as nothing in comparison.

I have not as yet been on the mountain, but yesterday after dinner I toiled up a steep hill in its neighbourhood, of name scarcely less rugged than ascent. It is called Drumvallagh; and even this is a mellifluous sound, in comparison with many other names I could mention. Near the top a Fever Hospital has lately been built. An Eastern Emperor (I think it was Aurungzebe) said that he would make his subjects so rich, that there should be no need of hospitals; and if the need be measured by poverty, we should have them here on every hill.

The lane along which I walked led me into a wild and romantic little glen. It is a deep and narrow chasm between two great mountains or rocks, which in some places approach so close that they seem to join. A shallow brook runs through it, but by stepping backwards and forwards, I was able to get on without much wetting of my feet. Towards the middle of the glen, I had one great step to take, and I was in what is called Mavey

Cann's parlour. It is a mere hollow in the rock, with a little pebbly strand, and the brook, which is here almost a torrent, in front. I seated myself on a stone, and whether it was the lulling sound of the water, or that it was ground of enchantment I trod, I fell fast asleep.

Mavey Cann you must know was a kind of fairy or witch, who resided here in ages past, and it would seem is still partial to her former abode. Her wild song is at times yet heard by the midnight traveller, and a man relates, that as he was coming down the glen, one dark night in winter last, he heard the well-known sound, and the trampling as of many horsemen behind; he travelled on greatly frightened, and still the trampling was behind, while the thistles and bushes shook violently before. At length turning desperately round, he saw a long troop of horsemen, and an old woman riding single in front of them; with a loud voice he bade God bless him, and the whole pageant vanished from his view.

Superstition is coeval with man, and it is not strange that his active imagination should people, with ideal beings, these lone woods and wild glens, and foaming torrents; or that the almost everlasting recurrence of storm, darkness and cloud, should create evil ones to be dreaded, rather than good ones to be loved.

By the help of the shrubs and underwood,

I clambered up the steep rock in front of where I had been sitting; but neglecting the precaution which is given to all who climb, when I was near the top I looked down, and my head actually got dizzy at the sight of the deep gulf and foaming torrent below. However, by good fortune I reached the summit in safety, and it will be some time before I travel the same road again.

Near the verge of the precipice there are two stones, of which tradition tells the following tale. When the Danes were in Ireland, they committed, as the custom is with conquerors, all manner of excesses; and on one occasion, a beautiful young virgin was pursued by two of these brutal invaders; she ran this way, and had gained something on them, when the frightful chasm before her met her eye. The poor affrighted Daphne ejaculated a prayer, and instantly endowed with miraculous strength, snatched up these two huge stones, and, as people are wont to do here when they take a great leap, threw them with all her force behind her, and cleared the gulf; while the two Danes, unable to stop themselves, fell down the rock and were dashed to pieces.

Female purity is of such importance to the well being and happiness of mankind, that not only has it been regarded by the rudest people with reverence, but as deserving the special

protection of heaven, and even holding immediate communication with it. In village story neither ghost nor goblin has power to harm the true virgin; and while Greece and Rome had their priestesses and vestals, these islands had their Druidesses, and the Continent still has its Nuns.

I again crossed the glen along a crazy wooden bridge, not quite two feet broad, and with no railing on either side; and it is possible that my passage here was not much less perilous than my preceding one. I overtook on the road a countryman with whom I had a slight acquaintance, and we immediately fell into conversation. The subject nearest his heart was uppermost at his tongue, and the first question he asked me was, "how the times now were in England?"

"Very middling," I replied. "Ay, I thought so," said he, "no wonder they should be so bad with us, but do you think there is any chance of their soon being better?" "I really do not know," I said, "when I left London, the people were all busy looking for Parliamentary reform, and that is a cure for every grievance. You will bring your pigs to a fine market then." "I would sooner see it than hear tell of it," replied he, "for the market is a plaguy bad one just now. But in how many months do you think we will have this reform?" "I cannot exactly say," I replied, "for minis-

ters do not like to be hurried, and it does not seem a favourite plan of theirs." "I'll be bound for it, it is no favourite of one of them," said he, "for we know him of old; but what signify the ministers, they are but few, and the people are many." "So they were," said I, "during our rebellion, and you see how little we have gained by it; and how we have only drawn the chain round our necks the closer." "Ah! those were old times," replied he, "but these are different ones; and besides the people of England are all of one mind, and there is no difference of sect among them." By an easy transition, we came next to talk of a young man from this neighbourhood, who has lately been married to a woman of large fortune there. "To think," said my companion, raising his hands in astonishment, "of the luck of some people, and that Terence Flagherty's son should be married to a fine London lady. I wonder did her father know that he was a Papist?" "I rather think not," said I, "for there are silly people in London as well as here, and it is possible, had he supposed it, he would not have given him his daughter." "He might have supposed it," said he indignantly, "if he had not been a fool." "How so, I pray you?" said I, "is there any art to find a man's religion in his face?" "To be sure there is," replied he,

"and in his name too; who ever heard of a Flagherty's going any where but to mass?"

Though this honest countryman was rather unreasonable, in expecting so much information in an Englishman; it is certain that in this country, men's religions are judged, and seldom misjudged either, in the way he mentioned. Catholics rarely marry except among themselves, and it is not strange therefore that they should have a peculiar style of countenance, in which oftener is to be found the beauty of expression, than of complexion. But the name is the grand criterion. An ancient Irish one is the sure sign of a catholic; and when the bearer happens to be otherwise, he gets no credit for the change, for he is regarded as a hypocrite, and still a catholic in his heart.

I lately heard Mr. O'Callaghan, who is returned for the borough of Dundalk, talked about, and some one in company asked what religion he was of? "A Protestant of course," said another, "or he could not sit in Parliament." "As real a one I warrant," resumed the first speaker, "as the Pope of Rome is, or as Pontius Pilate was a Christian." "It is a bad name to go to church with," certainly replied the other, "but I suppose the priest will give him absolution."

Not only are those poor Irish names bad to go to church with, but they are bad even for

the stage; and when Miss O'Neill's first success in London was announced, it was a general subject of wonder that she had not changed her name. Yet this despised name was once the highest prized one of the North of Ireland, and the chief of the great family which bore it, was called by way of distinction, the O'Neille. Fatal distinction! which involved almost all of them in destruction, and led its last ill-fated bearer to rebellion, murder, and violent death. A kindlier fortune decks with verdant laurels the scenic contests of his fair namesake, and rebellion is no longer treason, nor killing, murder in the O'Neille.

I stopped on the brow of the hill to contemplate a prospect, which could not be looked on without emotion. Below me was the rich vale and sparkling river and town indistinctly seen through the surrounding trees; the air was filled with purple vapours, and the setting sun arrayed with gold and azure the clouds of the evening sky. Before me was an Eden, and behind me was a wilderness. The mountain looked down in solitary majesty on the generation which bustled round it, as it had looked on the generations on generations which had bustled round it before. There is in the lonely grandeur of a mountain an unutterable sublimity, which approaches our souls as it were to the Deity, and we almost look to see him "rend the heavens and come

down," and to behold ourselves stand in his presence.

I was absorbed in these meditations, when I was recalled to myself by the loud merriment of the good-humoured person who still favoured me with his company. I was no ways offended by his merriment, for in a country-place, those who deviate from the common track, must be contented to be laughed at. Thales, the celebrated astronomer, was looked upon as an idiot, by the old woman who helped him out of the ditch, into which, while gazing on the sky, he had fallen.

This morning after breakfast, I took a long walk up the river-side. It is a favourite one of mine, for not only does it reflect the actual landscape, but the far fairer ideal one. Independent however of this, there is something in the contemplation of a river, as slowly it moves forward to bury itself in the great ocean, which fills me with boundless wonder and admiration.

It is probably more from a similar feeling, than from any pleasure which itself affords, that so many not irrational nor inhuman men, are fond of fishing. An acquaintance was employed in this, to him at least, unprofitable occupation, for though I stopped nearly half an hour, he had neither nibble nor bite. "My worthy sir," said I at length to him,

" if you do not eat your dinner till you catch it, I fear it will be a long time of coming."

How natural it is to us to praise the years that are gone. " Ah," replied he, " thirty years ago, when I fished first in this river, scarcely could I throw my line in, until the bait was snapped at; and in less time than you have stood there, I had half a score of trouts dancing on the grass." " They are growing wiser," I replied; " we all grow wiser by time, and the same bait would not catch you, my good friend, which caught you thirty years ago. But what think you has become of the fish; are they too emigrating to America?" " They would be fools," said he, " if they did not; neither fish nor flesh should stay in this country who can leave it." " How happens it then that you stay in it yourself?" I asked. " Its all my wife's doings," replied he; " if I were left to myself I would leave it before I was a month older, for what with rent, tithes, and taxes, if I do not get a dinner here, I shall shortly have none at all."

I was crossing a stile, when I was overtaken by a man who had seen me before him, and hurried on to have my company. Though of so sociable a disposition, this honest man was not an Irishman, nor had he far to go. He is an Englishman, and when the canal which connects this town with Lough Foyle

was in contemplation, he was brought over to make it. He went to America some years ago, but people of his description are numerous there, and he shortly afterwards returned. The Irish are a poetical rather than a mechanical people, and the Americans, it is probable, are the reverse. In time, I have little doubt, they will be both. Poetry, which as well as science dawned in the East, will, in all likelihood, set in the West.

I asked my little companion if he had any idea of going back to England. No, he replied, he "found himself comfortable where he was, and he would die where he had so long lived." "I suppose," said I, "Ireland seemed at first a strange residence to you?" "It did so," said he, "sure enough; but time reconciles us to every thing, and the journey to heaven is as near from Ireland as from England. Besides, the people are so kind-hearted and civil, that it makes amends for many faults; and I was never yet in a house that I did not meet a welcome when I went back again."

He was then going to pass the day at a very jovial one in the neighbourhood. Though an Englishman and a Methodist, he is not averse to the beverage of the country; for time, as he well remarked, does reconcile us to many things, and I never met in this country with an Englishman, of his condition in

life, that it did not reconcile to whiskey. So universal, indeed, is the perception of misery, and the nothingness of this world, that the people of all countries are pleased to have a cheap opportunity of drowning thought in intoxication, and creating a little happy world of their own. Even the nations which the strong motive of superstition induces to abandon the use of strong liquor here, look to it with longing for hereafter; and perpetual inebriation is the Mahometan's heaven.

Society induced me to extend my walk, and I did not quit my companion until I had left him near the house where he was going. I returned by the way I had come, and when I was near the town I sat down for a few minutes on a beautiful green bank. It seemed the very spot whereon to erect a little cottage to solitude and love; but it would be an ill-chosen situation, for good and evil are united like the rose and the thorn. In summer this gay bank is green in verdure, and fragrant with the hawthorn and meadow-sweet. In winter it is oftentimes a wide waste of waters, from the overflowing of the river, filled by the mountain torrents of this climate's almost ceaseless rains.

The suddenness with which the river rises is extraordinary, and oftentimes has produced very melancholy effects. Some years ago a little boy, who was standing on a stone fish-

ing, was borne off it by the violence of the increasing stream. A young gentleman rushed instantly in to save him, and though the water at first was not higher than his knees, in little more time than it has taken me to tell this, it was a torrent which, spite of all his struggles, bore him along with it. The cry of sorrow immediately reached the town, and every person ran to the water side. About twenty minutes after the accident, the body was seen quietly floating past the bank I have mentioned, and as quickly as possible was taken out and borne to the nearest house. During several hours I with many others tried every means to restore it to animation, but in vain, for the vital spark was extinguished for ever. I well remember how much I was affected on the occasion. It was a weakness, for we should mourn perhaps for the living, rather than for the dead.

"They are past the tyrant's stroke;
To them the reed is as the oak."

LETTER XVIII.

Strabane.

The assizes are at hand, and, as I do not like the confusion, I shall get out of the way of them, and go to-morrow to a country-house, where I am invited to pass some days. I should have gone to day, but it is Sunday, and I am not fond of leaving home on that day. It unites together relations more closely, and may be regarded as a sort of sanctification of family concord.

I had likewise an invitation for yesterday; and I accepted it more eagerly than the last time I was here I should have done, for it was only to an humble farm-house. But times are changed, and the frequent dinners of that period have in a great measure ceased. This was almost the last sacrifice the people had to make; for they had put down jaunting-cars, and closed up windows and hearths, before they gave up society.

I left this about two o'clock, intending to saunter on the road, until I should be overtaken by a jaunting-car with the rest of the party; but I had scarcely walked a hundred

yards beyond the outskirts of the town, until I was glad to shelter myself under a spreading tree. Often under the same tree have I found shelter from the rain, but never before had I occasion to seek it from the sun. He is a rare and reluctant visitant here, nor when he comes do we as a stranger give him welcome. His burning rays are loudly complained of, and I dare say few at this instant envy Italy its cloudless sky. Nor in truth do I know that they should. Moisture is congenial to the climate, soil, and inhabitants; nor is the earth ever less productive, nor the people more sickly, than after a long continuance of hot and dry weather.

This summer has been an unusually hot one here as well as elsewhere; and just as I was leaving town yesterday, the thermometer stood at eighty in the shade. This to the unaccustomed is an excessive heat, yet to those habituated to a greater, it is actual coldness, as I once had a curious opportunity of witnessing. When I first took a similar voyage to the one which I trust is now happily ended with you, we met near the Cape De Verd Islands a vessel homeward bound. Suddenly transported as we were from the depth of winter to this genial climate, we absolutely were melting; our shirt collars were open, and we wore nankeen pantaloons and white jackets. The yellow-visaged and

slim-bodied Easterns were shaking with cold, though they had drawn from their hiding-places their old-fashioned pantaloons and blue coats, with tarnished yellow buttons, emblems of themselves.

I was shortly joined by my friends, and almost every turn of the wheels, as we drove lightly forwards, revived some recollection. We passed the lane where I was nursed, and young as I was when I left it, I have a distinct recollection of the little white-washed cabin and neat garden. It is now a mouldering heap of ruins, where the thistle shakes its lonely head, and the moss whistles sorrowful to the wind.

The poor woman who nursed me is long dead, but to her husband I was enabled to do some small service, and to assist, I trust, in husbanding life's taper by repose. In this I barely did my duty, for our foster-fathers, as they are called, think they have claims only less than our real ones; and this honest creature had, I believe, a sincere affection for me. When I was about eighteen months old, my life was despaired of in the measles, and he made a vow to heaven, that if I recovered, he would go in pilgrimage to Lough Derry. In vigour of health he neglected its performance, but not many years back, when his infirmities admonished him that he was not to live for ever, he crawled there, for he would not for the

world have died and left such a vow unfulfilled.

The obligation of an oath was much less binding on him, or at least he was more dextrous in eluding it. As is unfortunately too common here, he was fond of spirits, and rarely neglected an opportunity of getting drunk. At length he was prevailed upon to take an oath against tasting them for three years. It was a troublesome oath for my mother while it lasted, and thankful she was when it had an end. It seems there was a reservation in favour of wine, but it must come from her hand; and many a time has she been taken from her meals and company to put into his hand the bottle which he had first put into hers.

When I was last here, he planted two poplars, which are now tall and graceful trees; and at this instant it is almost melancholy to look on them as they wave backwards and forwards, and bend their heads to each other before the evening wind. A poor creature who comes to the house for relief sometimes, compares them not unaptly to the rocking of a sorrowful old woman. Age knows its own miseries; though it has entered into a silly author's head to write of its comforts, while the very act of writing almost proves that his has none. Nobody ever thought of making a book on the comforts of youth.

We likewise passed the demesne of a house in which I have spent many pleasant hours. The house is now another's, yet I looked at the iron-gate, as if the late owner were to come forth to meet me, as he had often come before. The last new year's day that I was in this country I passed with him, and few as the years since have been, I have seen many changes. Of the uncertainties of human life, the uncertain continuance of friendship is not the least remarkable.

About the middle of a little hamlet called Clady, we turned on the mountain road, and we had here a terrible pull up a craggy and broken spot. The horse did its duty, and we got fairly up, but at the instant the tackle broke. This is a common accident on these roads, and scarcely ever wondered at. Luckily we found a cobler at hand, who proved an admirable harness mender, and in about half an hour we were enabled to proceed.

There is an extensive prospect from the farmer's door, but we had not time to look on it, for the company were long assembled, and our hostess's patience was fairly exhausted. It is but justice to her to say, that our dinner was well dressed and served up, and it was further, a most plentiful one. There was mutton and lamb, and chickens and ham, and tongue, and caudled gooseberries, and rich pudding; yet with all this I eat little, for beside the heat of

the room, there was an immense boiled goose before me, reeking with onion sauce. This dish I believe is peculiar to Scotland and the North of Ireland; but it is an indifferent specimen of my country's cookery, and I wish never again to behold it.

There were two decanters of tolerable port on the table, and three immense jugs of whiskey punch. This was exclusively drunk by the countrymen, for the port they regarded as a womanish liquor, and fit only for us effeminate people of the town.

The custom of making punch in jugs seems a better one, than that of each person making for himself. It mingles the spirits and water more intimately, and gives more mellowness to the liquor, from the practice of pouring it several times out of one jug into another. It is long since punch has been drank out of bowls, but the large china bowl still holds its place in closets, in memory of past times, and as an article of show.

The day was too hot for much drinking, and we shortly adjourned to the garden, where we amused ourselves with pulling currants, and talking of Parliamentary reform. During the latter years of the war, our farmers were rather loyalists than otherwise, for they had good sale for their produce, and most of them were members of the volunteer corps. But these honest countrymen were

for loyalty, as Bye-ends in the Pilgrim's Progress was for religion, in sunshine and golden slippers only, and when times changed, they changed along with them.

Our host's garden, if it had no other beauty, had, in an eminent degree, that of situation. All beyond was bleak bog that was not barren mountain, and it was seen therefore, like the green bank on the sandy desart.

We had tea in a room which might almost be called elegant. But let me not lead you to suppose, that a poor mountain farmer could give expensive entertainments, and live in rose-coloured rooms, from the produce of his little farm. The house was lately built for him, by a brother who returned a short while ago from the East Indies; and it is well for Ireland that a little money is brought in in this way, for just now little comes in in any other. To do our adventurers to the East Indies justice, they are not unmindful of their poor friends at home, and with many admonitions to correct their slovenly ways, they generally send handsome remittances, to give weight to their advice.

After tea we drove slowly homewards. It was a beautiful moon-light night, the Fin rolled its quiet waters, between green banks and rich meadows, and I was willing to prolong our drive, that I might gaze longer on

the silver stream, and reposing scene. The silent hills assumed fantastic shapes and forms, and shrunk into pigmy littleness, and swelled into giant greatness, as we approached or receded, as the moon beam fell lightly, or the distant mountain shadows were thrown darkly over them.

On one of those lonely hills which overhangs the road, are the ruins of a large house, which a very few years ago was inhabited by a numerous family, of which not one now remains. The last survivor was long a cripple, and confined to her chamber; yet strange to tell, beyond most people she enjoyed life. She had been deprived of the use of her limbs by a stroke of palsey, and was subject to spasms, which shook her head and body in frightful agitation, and caused her at times to utter the most fearful screams; but Nature, while it afflicted with the one hand, held forth relief with the other, and a dose of laudanum was scarcely swallowed, until it wrought an almost miraculous effect. Pain was relieved, spasm subsided, the countenance became serene and animated, and indicated the most heart-felt joy.

But it is the evil of this incomparable medicine, to lose much of its effect by repetition. She was therefore obliged gradually to increase the dose, until at length it amounted to the enormous quantity of four ounces in

the day. Nature could not long continue so highly wrought up, and she died about half an hour after taking her accustomed dose. Unquestionably it shortened, as well as gladdened life; but it divested death of all its terrors, and lulled her to sleep, as to one of those former delicious ones, when angels shadowed her suffering couch with their plumage, and her whole soul floated in joy.

Man is of few days only, and full of trouble; but there are two conditions in which he has happiness; when he is under the influence of a dose of laudanum, and when he is in love. In either case, in the words of an excellent old song, he may well say,

> "My mind to me a kingdom is,
> Such perfect joy therein I find;
> As far exceeds all earthly bliss,
> That God or nature hath assigned:
> Lo! thus I triumph like a king,
> Content with what my mind doth bring."

LETTER XIX.

Tormentmongan.

I LEFT Strabane yesterday, as I had proposed, in company with a pleasant little party, and comfortably seated on a jaunting car. It is true it was a bad conversation one, for it was so iron-wrought, that in moving it was more noisy than musical; but it was the fitter for these mountain roads.

We had travelled a few miles when I stopped to ask a man the way; but I might as well have spared myself the trouble, for his directions, though I am sure they were more honestly given, were as difficult to be unravelled as Tony Lumpkin's. We were to go sideways, and then straight forwards, and down a *wee* bray, and up a *heegh* hill, until at last we were to come to where four roads met. "But I presume," said I, "we are to take but one of them." "The middle one," replied the man gravely, without any seeming perception of the jest. I held this as good evidence that he was a Presbyterian, or at least that he was not a Catholic; for had he

been, he would have said, or endeavoured to say, something jocular in return.

We went down the *wee* bray, and up the *heegh* hill, which is called Whiskey-hill; but this appellation belongs, with such just title, to so many others, that I am at a loss to account for the preference of this particular one. Perhaps whiskey is made in greater quantities here than elsewhere; for on all hills, and, I believe I may add, in all vallies, people drink as much as they can.

We passed through the little town of Derg. It is a pretty one, and romantically situated; but the bridge is narrow and inconvenient, and, as it was a fair day, we had great difficulty in getting along it. By a perverse choice, it is the place where the yarn market is held, and our broad conveyance nearly spread from one side to the other, to the confusion both of buyers and sellers. There was great laughter, which continued as long as we were within hearing; for in an Irish fair there is as much good humour in the morning, as there is quarrelling at night. Like the enigma put to Prince Calef, in the Persian Tales, it is a tree whose leaves are white on the one side, and black on the other.

We walked up the rugged hill that leads to Castle Gore. Though, not many years ago, the seat of grandeur and magnificence, Castle Gore is now almost as absolute a picture of

desolation as I ever beheld. Yet it is interesting even in decay; elevated on a high hill, it is seen in every direction, and the antique avenue of old trees has further effect of beauty, in this land of mountains and floods.

Until lately, it was the residence of Lady Ross, a woman who has long outlived her generation, her eye-sight, and all her passions, except that one which increases with age. She lingered in this her ancient castle, until the floors cracking under her feet, and the ceilings tumbling on her head, admonished her to tardy and reluctant flight; for the trifle it would have taken to avert this calamity, she could not bear to part with.

She would, perhaps, have been a wonder in any country, but she was an especial wonder in this one, where profusion is the defect of the gentry, and parsimony the only fault which the poor do not forgive. Her garb, it is said, was that of a beggar woman; she lived on the coarsest food, and shivered over the miserable faggot which she had herself picked up, though her yard was filled with poultry, and her huge turf stacks were the nightly, and even daily prey of robbers. Many other stories are told of her, which, if true, indicate a degree of avarice that may well be called disease. Something however must be allowed for village narration, which never praises or censures by halves.

We were shown the house by a poor creature who occupies a part of it. Those who love moralising would here have had a subject; and as they thought of the instability of the world, and the vanity of human greatness, would have laughed or cried, as they were of the humour of Heraclitus or Democritus. In my lady's own chamber was collected in one corner, the poor man's turf, and in the other his flax. In the breakfast-parlour were deposited his little agricultural implements, where they lay intermingled with broken pistols, and stocks of fowling-pieces, and rusty scabbardless swords.

The rooms above stairs were rather in better order, but there was little in their appearance to attract attention. They are neither large nor small, nor high nor low. In parts they are painted in imitation of marble, and viewed at a little distance, it seemed to my eye no bad imitation. The partitions are done in compartments, and by the means of sliding pannels, there is an immediate and easy passage from one room to another. Doubtless they were often made use of for the purpose of escape, for the good old times, so pleasant to read about, were perilous ones to live in.

Squire Edwards, the father of Lady Ross, was as much distinguished for thoughtlessness and profusion, as she is for the reverse. It is said that when his apothecary's bill came in

about Christmas, in place of money, which was never ready with him, he generally gave a town-land, and thereby laid the foundation of the riches of one of the wealthiest families in a neighbouring county. He was once sheriff of this county, and very possibly the honour cost him still more of his town-lands; for the gilded coach and harness, the led horses and splendid trappings, and rich liveries, with silver tassels hanging to the gloves' ends, I have heard of not once, but a hundred times.

But his hospitality, and the kindness with which the stranger was ever welcomed, and the beggar relieved at his gate, are still more affectionately remembered and talked about. Warm and kind-hearted man! could he look from the grave where he is mouldering, and behold his wasted dwelling, scarcely less mouldering than himself! Or, could the beautiful and favourite daughter who lies by his side, be permitted a while to leave her earthly bed, and behold the sad change in this gay scene of her youth! Could she see the picture which was taken of her when she was scarcely nineteen years of age, and which gallantry doubtless flattered, and romance adored, drawn as I yesterday saw it by coarse plebeian hands, from a heap of lumber, and rudely beat against the wall, as the readiest means of dispelling the cloud of dust which

rested on it!! God of my fathers, could the dusky mirror before which, in pride of youth and beauty she arrayed herself, have reflected to her this also, what would her heart's feelings have been!

Even by the torn picture I could discover that the young lady was beautiful; and though the style of dress is ancient, I think it beautiful also. There is no covering on the head; the hair is tightly turned up from the face, leaving bare the forehead, temples, and ears. An important article of female dress of that day, is not overlooked; and the stomacher is studiously ornamented, and curiously wrought. How often has the young heart, which swelled against the stomacher represented by this painted canvas, beat with hope and fear, with love, and perhaps with hatred too? It is motionless now as the canvas, and the fair frame in which, as in a precious but fragile casket it was inclosed, senseless as the decaying portrait, which when I had done looking on, was again thrown rudely on the floor.

The death of a young and beautiful woman, is to all a subject of melancholy, but in this instance it comes home to my feelings in a particular degree; for though not a relation of the Edwards's, I am a relation of those that are. My ancestors too were closely connected with them, and my mother was born in their neighbourhood. The beautiful young lady

was her godmother, and held her a helpless infant in her fair arms, to be sprinkled with the pure water that was to make her an inheritor of eternal life. The famed beauty has long passed away, the helpless infant is now almost a helpless old woman, the mother of a man who is no longer young, and whose own picture cast down from its present place in the drawing-room, may in a few years give occasion to the melancholy moralizing in which he now induges himself.

" By him, and all, must praise and blame be found
At best a fleeting gleam, or empty sound."

After leaving Castle Gore, the road became smoother, and we drove four Irish miles in no long space of time. There was a little village called Rilleter in sight of us, but we crossed to the right, a bridge which bears its name. It is neatly executed, and the inscription informs us that it was built in 1786; yet recent as this date is, such is the dampness of the climate, that in many parts the inscription is illegible.

It was one continued ascent from the bridge to this house, and it was a long ascent, for the distance is nearly three miles. The landscape was now changed from green hills and sheltered valleys, to distant heath and rugged mountains; but the sun had broke forth from the dark mantle which had covered his head

all the morning, and shed radiance even on these russet hills. On a fine day we expatiate in mere animal existence, and contented within ourselves, find beauty in each surrounding scene. We were met by several people, who all in passing bade us good e'en; and my heart melted at the sweet pastoral sound, which brought to my mind the days of other years.

It was nearly half past five when we got here; and to say the truth I was not sorry to be at my journey's end, for notwithstanding the bright sun, the mountain air bit nippingly, and a comfortable dinner was scarcely more acceptable, than the plentiful turf fire which blazed cheerful on the wide hearth. Though I had no other company than females, I was not the less obliged to partake of the accustomed liquor, which, to do it justice, was excellent; and further, to give it relish I had long stories, of all that had passed since I was here last. Surrounded by mountains, and with their wishes even unstraying beyond their own horizon, in the midst too of riches and abundance, these good people, like all others, had much of evil to tell of, and little of good to relate. Almost every tale was of sorrow, and scarce a year was unmarked by some disasterous event.

I would have turned the conversation to different subjects and distant scenes, but the

world to them was their own mountains, and they were regardless of every thing beyond. People who live much in solitude are glad to see strangers, not so much to hear as to be heard; for the mind becomes tumid with the pent-up load of existence, and the straying stranger is as salt cast on the filled leach, which enables it to disgorge itself.

The arrival of a doctor in these mountains soon spreads far and wide, and that very evening I had several patients. I crossed afterwards a few fields to visit one who could not come to me; she was an old woman on the very verge of human existence, racked with pain, and lying a helpless cripple on the wretched bed on which she had lain upwards of twenty years; yet so powerful is the instinct which binds us to this world, that she was anxious as youth or happiness to live. I sat down beside her, while she enumerated, and I had no reason to doubt of her truth, a train of suffering, sickness and calamity, sufficient, one should have thought, to destroy not one weakly woman, but twenty stout men. It was well replied by an Indian sage to Alexander, who asked him which was the strongest, Life or Death; that it was Life, because it bears so many evils.

I must not conclude without telling you of a heavy evil which befel me even before I was born. My grandfather lived at no great dis-

tance from Castle Gore, and was a great favourite of the Squire's. Indeed he was the next to him in place and honour, and it is recorded in our family annals, that his wife was the second person who had a tea equipage, as possibly a few cups and saucers were called, on Dergwater. Desirous effectually to serve his friend, the Squire gave him a large tract of land for ever, at a very cheap rate. My grandfather went home delighted, but early the following morning, he came back to the Castle, and returned the gift to the astonished Squire. "In truth," said the good old man, in reply to the other's remonstrances, "it is none of my fault, but the *gude* wife has given me no quiet since she heard it, nor could she rest quietly she says in the grave, if she thought her bairns were living on land which had been taken over other people's heads." "Well Mr. S—," said Squire Edwards, "you may do as you please, but both you and Mrs. S—, may be assured, that whether you take the land or not, the people who had it, shall never have it again." However, the honest and disinterested farmer was not to be prevailed upon, and persisted in his obedience to the *gude* wife's mandates.

This tract of land is now a rich inheritance, and had it not been for her scruples, would in all probability have been mine. Time perhaps was when I regretted this, but I regret it

no more; for the period cannot be very distant, when I shall have as much land as I require.

The Teutones were defeated by the Consul Marius with great slaughter, and the fields all around were strewn with their slain. Unacquainted with the fatal disaster, their associates, the Cimbri, asked land for themselves and their brethren, as they called these unfortunate men. "Do not trouble yourselves about your brethren," said the Consul, with emphasis which was not to be misunderstood, "they have land enough which we have given them, and they shall have it for ever."

LETTER XX.

Termentmongan.

Our fortunes, like our faces, have strong general resemblance, yet are they almost as endlessly diversified; and perhaps there is no one, whose life, in some of its parts, does not deserve to be told. I shall therefore relate a few particulars of the gentleman to whom this house, and the adjacent lands belonged; nor was it any mighty possession, for the house is only a cottage, though a neat one, and the land is nothing but mountain.

He was uncle to the present occupants, and a relation, nor a very distant one neither, of my own. In early life, he was bound an apprentice to an apothecary in Strabane. This gentleman had several daughters, and the young Esculapius became enamoured, not with the youngest, as is customary in story books, but with the oldest of them. The attachment was a mutual one, and when he was leaving home to seek elsewhere his fortune, the fond couple betrothed themselves to each other, with many a solemn protestation and vow. A foolish kind of engagement

in general it is, but in this instance it proved otherwise; for the lover was constant, and the lady was true. Besides, he had the prospect of a speedy return; for he had got an appointment at Bombay, and India was then an unwrought mine, where gold was to be had almost for the digging. How much it is wrought out now, you will yourself have an opportunity of judging.

The beginning of his journey was but of indifferent augury. The passage between Newry and Liverpool has ever been a disastrous one, as I know by fatal experience; and the vessel in which he had taken his passage was wrecked somewhere on the coast of Cheshire. His life was saved, though with difficulty, but all his cloaths were lost; and this was a heavy misfortune to a young adventurer from these mountains, who had little other wealth than his own mind. However, he had friends who procured him a second outfitting, and he sailed for Bombay.

His voyage of life was not yet to be fortunate; and the gallant Indiaman was wrecked, as well as the crazy Newry vessel. A number of the crew, as well as passengers perished; but life beat young in his veins; and not less intrepid than robust, he was able, not only to save himself, but several others. Among these, was a young man from London, who, in consequence became strongly attached to him.

Shortly afterwards, they were taken up by another vessel, which, without disaster, landed them at the place of their destination. The young Londoner, who was a mere adventurer, went on board a country ship as a mate, and Mr. S——, for that was my relation's name, joined the army.

Those were turbulent times in India; and during several years he was almost constantly in the field. He was present at the taking of several very rich places, his share of the spoil of which was considerable, and it was a mere chance that it was not great, beyond even his wishes. Immediately on the occupation of some town, he took possession of a pagoda or mosque, as an hospital; and barely glancing his eyes round to see that it would answer, he left a few of his followers, and ran out to superintend the bringing in of the sick and wounded. In the interval, it was visited by a party that were more observant, and who rummaged every hole and corner, until they found, under a heap of rubbish, treasure sufficient to have made them all happy, could riches make men so. But they cannot, and least of all, riches got in such a manner.

I have frequently heard Mr. S—— relate this hair breadth escape of good fortune, nor could I ever observe that he regretted it; but a loss which he sustained shortly afterwards, he did seem to regret. An intimate acquaint-

ance who was attached to the brigade to which he belonged, was suddenly ordered to a remote part of the country; and it was a fatal order to him, for a short while before he had lent a large sum to some native merchants. In this unexpected dilemma he came to Mr. S——, and by dint of intreaties and importunities, at length prevailed on him to take the bonds into his own hands, and give him the money.

This was a singular instance of good nature, for it amounted to eleven thousand pounds, and was within a few hundreds of all he had in the world. It would be a tiresome story to tell the particulars, but it is sufficient to say that shortly afterwards the whole district was restored to its original owners, and that he never received a single pagoda. Heavy as this misfortune was in itself, it was then heavier still, for he had now been nearly twelve years from the object of his attachment, and he had just written to her, that he would sail for England, almost by the first fleet. But who would return pennyless from India, or would be welcome even to his mistress, if he did? Without meaning disrespect to a sex of which I have ever thought highly, it would be a still ruder trial of affection, than the mock mutilation of the fantastic lover of a favourite farce.

My friend wasted in India a few more of

the blissful years of his youth, and irretrievably injured his constitution, not from his own cupidity, but by the advantage taken of his good nature by another. It was out of that other's power to render justice; for a short time after they had parted, he was taken prisoner by Hyder Ally, and died at Seringapatam.

At length Mr. S—— came down to Bombay to take his departure for Europe, and he here met with his friend Captain A——, who had for some years been the commander of a country ship. Many as the years were that had elapsed, he had never forgotten his old preserver, but had sent him, from every place he had visited, presents of whatever they afforded of curious or rare. On the present occasion, he brought him from Mocha a valuable Arabian horse, which the other long refused acceptance of; but finding his friend obstinate, he at length seemingly complied; and by a refinement on sentiment, which might be regarded as superfluous, he left orders with his agent to sell the horse the instant he had sailed, and to give Captain A—— the money. It was disposed of for five hundred guineas. Shortly afterwards it was brought to London, where it was sold for twelve hundred pounds, and it was long regarded as the most famous Arabian in England.

Captain A——, before they parted, gave a still stronger proof of his regard. His friend was involved in a quarrel with a man of a very turbulent disposition, and likewise remarkable for being a good marksman. The honest seaman considered himself also something of a marksman, and he sought the offender in the intention of bringing the duel on himself, and Mr. S—— only discovered the design in time to prevent the meeting from taking place. It seems worth telling, that, unaccustomed as he was to the use of fire arms, he wounded his antagonist in the side, while the famed marksman struck a bush which was some yards distant.

Mr. S—— landed in England with two thousand pounds only, which was all he could with certainty call his own. He hastened afterwards to Ireland, where he married the lady to whom he had been so long attached, and who was deserving of his attachment.

For a short while he lived on his small income, and, could we read the heart of man, had perhaps greater happiness than he afterwards had on a much greater one. But Fortune was now as profuse of her favours, as before she had been niggard, and came to him with both her hands full. He received with compound interest a large sum which he had lent the India Company several years before, and which, from the confusion of

their affairs, he had in a measure despaired of ever getting; and nearly about the same time Captain A—— died at Bombay, and bequeathed him the earnings of his life, which probably amounted to ten or twelve thousand pounds.

Though this gentleman had a brother in London who was by no means in affluent circumstances, he took not the slightest notice of him nor of his family. It seems the honest citizen, in transacting some little business for him at the India House, had, with more honesty than policy, charged him for attendance, as well as postage and coach hire. This minuteness of economy which circumstances have rendered necessary in England, and which at the same time is so just, is offensive beyond measure to Indians, who, accustomed to contemplate money only in large masses, and to habits of great profusion, detest all details of economy, which they regard as sordid and mean.

The first time afterwards that Mr. S—— went to London he made enquiries after his friend's family, and found that the London brother had shortly followed the Indian one, and that they were then together in that oblivious country, where love and hatred are no longer, and where enmity and friendship are alike forgotten.

The widow, he learned, still continued the

business, and he called one afternoon at her house, and found her alone in the shop. She was in deep mourning, and in reply to his salutation and general enquiry, said, "she was as well as could be expected, after the heavy misfortunes which had so lately befallen her." Mr. S—— begged to enquire, if it were not improper, what these misfortunes were; and as widows are not remarkably uncommunicative, she at once replied, that she had lost her husband; and her husband's brother had died not long before in the East Indies, leaving his fortune from her poor little family, to an Irish cheat, who had contrived to push between him and all his relations; "but what better," concluded she, "could be expected from an Irishman, and the trick was worthy of his country."

Mr. S—— expressed sympathy for the fair afflicted, who in truth had good reason to complain; for though circumstances may keep us apart from our relations while we live, we owe to them our fortunes when we die. The ancient Sceptics who doubted every thing else, held this as certain, that we should direct our conduct by our natural affections, and the laws and customs of our country; and though not infallible, they are, I believe, our surest guides. My friend said, "that he had been an old acquaintance of captain A.'s, and requested to see his little nephews and

nieces; and when he had talked for some time with the young and numerous group, and was on the point of going away, he told who he was. The lady's astonishment, as well as the eclaircissement, may readily be conceived. He gave a sum, the amount of which I do not exactly know, but I have no doubt it was considerable, to each of the nephews and nieces.

But whether it was considerable or otherwise, it has been well thriven on. The daughters are respectably married, and the eldest son is now in possession of what, in this country at least, would be regarded as a princely fortune. Riches too have begot honours, and my friend's humble ward is now a knight, and is, or was lately, a sheriff of London. He is not yet married, but he may when he pleases, for to be "a lady, and ride in a gilt coach," what woman could find in her heart to refuse.

I could wish my little story ended here, and that my worthy friend were still alive, to enjoy the wealth which he so well deserved; but his liver had long been diseased, and in vain he sought in society and change of scene, relief from the deadly arrow which rankled in his side. He died not a very long while ago in the neighbourhood of Exeter, where he had resided for some time before. Conversing cheerfully with his family, he suddenly fell

down, and almost immediately expired. He had long dreaded this event, and was frequently heard to say, "that he was convinced his liver was almost entirely consumed within him."

Such is the penalty we pay for the riches of India, and such the re-action of the evils which we have inflicted there; evils, which distinguished as England is for humanity, were scarcely less great than those caused by Timour, or any other scourge or ravager of the earth. Unostentatious of cruelty, we did not, it is true, erect pyramids of human heads, but famine, which avarice aggravated, if it did not cause, though a little more slowly, destroyed as surely as ambition could have done. The present generation seems disposed to make amends for the crimes of former ones, and I trust the time is not distant, when the inoffensive Gentoo, as he contemplates the wide increase of security and comfort, will exclaim as he used to do, when he beheld unproductive fields and desolate dwellings, the 'Christians have been here.'

Nor did my poor friend suffer only in his own person, but in that of his darling child, whom he left the heiress of his large possessions. Happier had it been for her that he had never strayed beyond these mountains, and that she had been born on them an humble country maid, for with his riches, she

likewise inherited his disease. Her death followed closely on his, when she had scarcely attained to womanhood; and the childless mother is now returned to this country, to close her eyes where she first drew breath. Long may it be before she closes them, for the sake of others as well as her own. Almost all her large income is spent in acts of benevolence, and while she can scarcely be persuaded to take the comforts of life, her outstretched hand prevents even the demands of distress.

How much such benefactors are at present wanted in this country, none but those who witness its misery can form an idea, and those who know it best will the most deplore.

LETTER XXI.

Termentmongan.

It has been my fortune to live much in cities, and oftentimes when sated with their amusements, or disgusted with their bustle, have I sighed for the loneliest solitude. In the impassioned language of the Psalmist, I have exclaimed, "O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest; lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness." But we are not to be trusted even with the gratification of our own wishes, and now that I have obtained mine, I am discontented with them. Yet if happiness consists in quietness, and an evenly tenor of life, rather than in multiplicity of enjoyments, I should have it here. But happiness is seated only in the mind, and when that is ill at ease, we would in vain hasten our escape "from the windy tempest and storm."

I seldom stray far from the house, for these naked mountains have few inducements to toil over them, and besides are at times not a little dangerous. In this land of flocks and herds, one is never sure of not falling in with

a bull, or at the least a vicious cow, and I never was, and am now as little as ever, a Guy of Warwick. I therefore saunter about the doors in the morning, or at the furthest go down to a little glen at a short distance, where I sit for hours listening to the noise of the water as it falls from rock to rock, and to the ceaseless cawing of the rooks, as they fly about the old trees over my head.

My evenings are spent in the house, nor after all are they unpleasantly spent. I sometimes enter into the conversation, but oftener seem to be occupied with a book, that it may flow unrestrained. It never languishes, for when the realities of life are exhausted, there is a never-failing resource in the visionary world around. These good people have communed so long with their own thoughts, that they start from them in affright, as children do from the reflection of themselves in a looking glass, or from their shadows on the wall.

In solitude we are not alone, for when we have no living beings to converse with, we give life to inanimate objects, and clothe with form and substance, even the chimeras of our own brains. The waters here have their witches, the green glen of my morning seat, its fairies, the hill its wandering spirits, and though last not least, the bed has its dreams. My hostesses, in all the business of life, are as rational as they are good women, yet so much controul

has fancy over them, that they are not more firmly persuaded of the truth of the Bible, which they daily read, than that nature unlocks for them, the door which opens on futurity, and by dreams and visions holds immediate, and almost nightly communication with their souls.

Their brother, to whom they were much attached, died not very long ago. Sitting one night, a short time before it happened, in the room where he lay, the candle on a sudden was almost extinguished; a gust of wind came against the window, in the midst of which was heard a deep and long-drawn sigh, and at the same instant there was a loud stroke on the little table between them, as if done by the end of a whip. "Oh King of Glory," exclaimed they, "receive our brother's soul in mercy, for we now see he is to be taken from us."

To recount all their dreams would require a volume rather than a letter; but I shall relate you two, and were all dreams like these, it would be no kindness to weaken belief in them. "Their mother was nearly eighty years of age at her death, and had been confined to her bed for a long while before. About a week before it happened, one of her daughters dreamed that she walked into their little parlour, dressed as if for a journey; and at the

instant there entered through the window, an acquaintance who had long been dead, and the room became effulgent as it were with a heavenly light. He took her by the hand as if to lead her away; her daughters clung round her, but she gently put them aside. "Do not stop me," said she, "for where I go, you must go, and I shall be as happy as a church."

When they communicated this dream to their aged parent, it filled her with joy, for she too had just had a remarkable one. "She imagined she was at a distant part of the country where she was born, and had passed her early days. She stood in the little garden, in the midst of which grew a beautiful and spreading tree; the leaves seemed of chrystal or amber, and it was loaded with the most delicious fruit. Towards the top was seated a venerable old man, whom, on looking up, she knew to be her father; and who plucked one of the highest branches and presented it to her. "Oh father," exclaimed she, "I am unworthy." "Take it," said he, "for you have well merited it, and then come and sit by me." Delightful delusion! which makes the day of our death seem better than the day of our birth; which, on the racked couch, where, without help, we cannot move ourselves, gives us a bright foretaste of the joys of heaven; and cheers those we leave behind us in this

wilderness of sorrow, with the blissful idea, that we are not mouldering in the dark grave, but are rejoicing in the regions of light.

But it is here justice to my friends to say, that a belief in dreams is by no means confined to them, nor to these lonely mountains; but extends to village and valley, and to persons of much higher rank in life. A lady, (for the most indefatigable dreamers are of your sex,) can always tell by her dreams when sickness is coming; and though they are of mere mortal substances, yet they are not the less loathsome on that account. Sometimes she wanders in a shambles or a butchery, and then she is suddenly transported to her own kitchen, where she superintends the cutting up of carcases, and breaking them into joints; or draws flesh half cooked and revolting from the fire, and though loathing, yet as if by invincible force, eating of it. A physician would here be the best Daniel, and at once would tell her, that sickness, as she foreboded, was not coming, but had actually come; that her stomach was nauseated and overloaded, and therefore that meat came before her in this disgusting manner, as to the famished Tantalus it presented itself under tempting fruit's most delicious forms.

In reality dreams are only broken and imperfect sleep, for in its complete and perfect

state, there is a total cessation of sensation and thought, and consequently of all intellectual operation. But this complete and perfect sleep seldom occurs, as there are few, if any, who have a perfectly sound mind in a sound body. It is dependent on the state of digestion, on the increased or diminished action of the heart or lungs, and on the gloom or cheerfulness of our minds. Oftentimes these excite absolute watchfulness, but oftener they only render the sleep incomplete, and produce partial interruption of thought; and in this interruption consists that incoherent and inconsistent thinking, which we denominate dreaming.

Simple and obvious as this explication is, dreams have had a powerful influence over mankind in all ages, and have been regarded by almost every nation, as prophetic of future events, and oracles of Heaven. Nor has this predominance of imagination over reason, been confined to the unlettered multitude, but has extended to the most elegant scholars, and most distinguished heroes. The virtuous and ill-fated Brutus was subdued by a dream, before he was subdued by Antony, and came to Philippi despondent, though resolved. Cicero, in his unmerited exile, was almost as much cheered by one. He dreamed that he was wandering disconsolate in a lonely place, when his townsman Marius accosted him, and

asked him why he was so melancholy; and, upon his replying that he was driven from his country by violence, the other took him kindly by the hand, and conducted him into his own monument, telling him that there he should find safety. When he afterwards heard that the decree of his recall had passed in this very same monument, he exclaimed in a rapture, that dreams were divine.

In the hour of prosperity we mock at such an opinion, but in the evil hour, which more or less comes to all, we all more or less believe in it, and, while our judgments condemn, confess it by our fears. The truth is, we are nearly all alike subject to evil, and are altogether alike unknowing of the remedy or cause; and superstition is the child of ignorance and fear.

Dreams in Scripture are represented as exerting a powerful agency, and as forming the grand communication between man and his Maker. Without entering into the question, whether the Supreme Being ever did in this manner operate on men's minds, or influence the determination of their will, it is certain that some of these dreams are interesting and beautiful ones. We here behold the unrivalled extent of Eastern imagination, and how poor and subdued ours is in comparison. I know of no dream of modern times deserving of notice, that does not owe much of its excel-

lence to Scripture. I pass over that of Clarence in Shakespeare, for with it you must be well acquainted, but I would strongly recommend to your perusal the one of Lovelace in Clarissa Harlowe, not merely to illustrate what I have been saying, but as a means to induce you to read the entire work.

Admirable however as it is, and partial as I am to its great author, I must at the same time admit, that I know of no dream in modern times to be compared to the one of the younger Count Moor, in the German play of the Robbers. In shadowy gloom, indistinct dread, and sublime horror, it is unequalled; and the scattered fragments of many dreams and passages in Scripture are brought together, in a manner almost too terrific to be contemplated. I regret I cannot transcribe it for you, for I have not the play here. I shall however, before I leave Strabane, for I suppose you have not the Robbers in your library, nor do I know that you should. It is coarse in many of its parts, as if even in grandeur to humble us with a sense of our littleness, and to show us how limited are our faculties, and how irreconcileable are genius and taste.

The dream of Osmond in the Castle Spectre is a mere copy of this celebrated one, and, though not wanting in merit, like most other copies, it is far inferior to the original. I can-

not here forbear relating a little anecdote of a worthy man with whom I had a slight acquaintance, but who, like most others with whom I had acquaintance, whether slight or great, is now no more. I was present one night at the representation of this play at Drury-lane. The part of Osmond was done by the late Mr. Raymond; and I know not whether from his manner of acting, or some other cause, but there was much disapprobation, even from his first appearance. However he was allowed to procced until he had got about half through his dream, when the hissing became very general, and so intolerable I suppose to the poor man, that he nimbly started from his knees, smoothed his visage, adjusted his night-cap, and coming forward to the front of the stage, addressed the audience. Luckily for him they happened to be in a good humour, and sent him back to his dream with a light heart; and what was not the least ludicrous circumstance, he was in an instant all the player again, and took his part up exactly at the place where he had left off. But we before the scene were not players, nor could we twirl our feelings about so easily; and, though there was no more hissing, poor Raymond for that night raved and ranted in vain.

I believe it is Sancho who says, that sleep, like death, makes us all equal, and puts upon

a level the beggar and the king. It is another extraordinary circumstance attending it, that as well as conscience it makes cowards of us all. The greatest hero is not a hero in his dreams. He laments, he sorrows, but he rarely resists, and never subdues. The unshackled imagination, like the shivering ghost, as fancy supposes it, just separated from the body, wanders disconsolate in the wildest regions of possible being, and embodies forms of danger and affright, more horrible than it can bear to behold. The heroic though remorseless Richard, with whose every fibre courage seems interwoven, is only a hero when he is awake. In the very act of dying, his soul breathes defiance, and by another happy emendation of an unrivalled actor, the eye about to close for ever, gleams an instant with the expiring taper's brightness, and the feeble hand, about to fall nerveless, darts a little forward the impotent sword. But he awakens, bathed in the coldest dew of apprehension, from a mere dream.

" Have mercy, Jesu! Soft I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue — is it not dead midnight?
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What! do I fear myself? there's none else by."

When I was a student at Edinburgh, I heard the following story related by Doctor Gregory, the celebrated professor there. It

is curious, for it shows, that in certain situations, or, at least with certain persons, the mind in sleep, carries on through the senses, an intercourse with surrounding objects.

On board one of the transports which took out troops during the American war, there was a young officer who spoke aloud in his sleep, and got up and lay down, and though his eyes were close shut to objects whose ears were open to sounds. In a crowded transport, so singular a peculiarity could not long escape observation, nor in the society of young and thoughtless officers could it fail to be played upon. Whenever they were disposed to amuse themselves, they would approach the poor sleeper's birth, and halloo in his ear that the enemy were coming, and bid him defend himself. Instant his thoughts would take the direction intended, and he would throw his arms about as if brandishing a sword. When his tormentors had entertained themselves long enough with this mock combat, they could at once change the element of his suffering, by telling him that the vessel was sinking, and desiring him to strike out boldly, and try to save himself. As suddenly he would imitate all the movements of one who swims, and turn to the right or left, or on his face or back, as he was directed. But even in sleep it is easier to inflict pain than to give pleasure; and when these mischievous

young men became tired of persecuting him, and spoke of conquest or safety, the words dropped pointless on his ear. He still continued restless and agitated, nor could he get rid of this singular night mare which so rudely bestrode him, until he was awaked by force.

One more story and then I shall, as it is full time, be done. After what I have written, you will not suspect me of having faith in dreams, but in this one there is a melancholy coincidence with the event, and coincidence strikes us in spite of ourselves. Even Cassius, though an Epicurean, as he raised his dagger against Cæsar, turned his eye to the statue of Pompey exulting; and while the ill-fated usurper lay mangled with wounds on the pedestal, called on the hero's shade, to preside over the work of vengeance, and to enjoy his enemy's agony.

A few years ago, a respectable young man from this country married a very accomplished and deserving lady, who then resided, and still, I believe, resides, in the neighbourhood of London. A short while afterwards, business required his presence here; and as it was in the month of June or July, and as at that season no danger was to be apprehended, he proposed going by Liverpool as the shortest conveyance.

The night before his departure, his wife

had the following extraordinary dream. She imagined that she had just taken leave of him, and that her sorrow was far beyond what so short a separation would warrant. Horror chilled her soul, while, driven forward as it were by an irresistible hand, she followed a black coach, in which a form like her husband's was seated. The horses plunged into a water. She plunged in, and borne through, above, beneath, before, behind, on every side, she accompanied them. She stretched forth her hands, and would have grasped the form within, but it was graspless as air. She spoke, but still it sat silent, gazing sadly on her. The coach reached a green bank, which came down to the very water's edge. Instantly the earth opened, and coach, horses, and form tumbled in. She could endure no longer, and with a scream awoke.

So strong was the impression which this made on her mind, that she begged her husband to give up the thoughts of going to Ireland, at that particular time; but his business was urgent, and as man values himself on his courage, he was ashamed perhaps to alter his plans, because his wife had an unpleasant dream. However, she was not to be altogether put off and made him promise, that he would go by Hollyhead, instead of Liverpool.

That night he went to the Bull-and-Mouth Inn, to take his seat by the mail to Shrews-

bury; but the coach was filled inside as well as out, and he was therefore under the necessity of going by the Chester one. He took an outside seat, and as he was a good deal fatigued by the journey, he resolved to stop a day at this place.

The night of his arrival, he wrote in high spirits to his wife, stating these circumstances, and his intention of going on to Hollyhead, the following afternoon. He was just ending his letter, when he was joined by a countryman of his own, who was likewise going to Ireland; and so little do we know what is good for us in this life, — this vain life which passes as a shadow, — that he mentioned it in a postcript as a fortunate occurrence. They supped together, and of course talked of the journey they were both about taking.

What arguments were made use of to induce the poor young man to alter his intention, can never now be known. But what is known is, that the following day after breakfast, instead of going to Hollyhead, he went in a chaise with his countryman to Parkgate. Some time in the course of that day, they went on board a packet, which sailed almost immediately afterwards. The evening was beautiful, the sky was without a cloud, and the sea almost without a curl; when in some unaccountable manner, the vessel struck upon a rock, or bank of sand; I cannot now tell ex-

actly which. It remained some time in that situation, and several were saved by swimming, or were taken off by boats. However, the greater number remained, for on so delicious an evening and so smooth a sea, they could hardly bring the reality of danger to their view. Unfortunately, the vessel which already had leaned a good deal down, suddenly sunk in the deep water, and except her masts, was scarcely more to be seen.

Among those who perished, was the unfortunate subject of this little tale. The body was recognised by letters found in his pocket, and by the initials of his name on his linen and handkerchief. The letter he had written from Chester was not put into the office until the following morning. The very afternoon of the day on which she received it, his widow read in a newspaper an account of the shipwreck, and the melancholy fulfilment of her own dream.

LETTER XXII.

Termonlmongan.

I was yesterday on a pilgrimage to Lough Derg, and, like the pilgrimage of life, a wearisome business I found it. Lough Derg is a lake among these immense mountains, in which there are several little islands, one of which is called the Holy one. It likewise goes under the name of St. Patrick's Purgatory, I presume, from some traditional association with that distinguished saint. Possibly he lived, or died, or was buried there; for venerated as he has long been in Ireland, not only his history, but even his name is unknown. Patrick is merely a corruption of Patricius, or Patrician, with which title, to give weight to his mission, Pope Celestine invested him.

It is a melancholy, and at the same time, a whimsical instance of the uncertainty of the world, and the vanity of pride, that the mighty name of Patrician has left little trace of its existence, except in this remote island, where the Roman arms never penetrated; and that too under the homely, and familiar, and

diminutive appellation of Pat. I question whether the wildest changes in the combination of those atoms, out of which, according to Epicurus, were formed man and the world, would to the imagination of Scipio or Cato, have appeared so extraordinary.

Lough Derg has long been famous in the religious annals of this country, and at one period it was visited by foreigners from the remotest parts. A few stragglers still come from England, and even France, but as much I should suppose from curiosity as from devotion. The Irish pilgrims still flock from all parts of the kingdom, and are almost as numerous and zealous as ever. Yet less perhaps than any other, the Irish peasant should do supererogatory penance, for his life to most would be a perpetual one.

Our party was a large one, and consisted both of males and females. We were preceded by a man who served us as a guide, and the old servant woman of the house availed herself of the occasion to perform her pilgrimage in good company. We walked, for there was no road accessible to a conveyance, nor indeed any road at all. Our path lay over heathy hills and along dark and narrow glens.

After a couple of hours walking, we had a distant view of the lake and the holy island it contains. Our ancient pilgrim counted her

beads and crossed herself at the glad sight, and could her feelings at that moment have been arrested and committed to paper, it is possible they would be found not far inferior to those with which Christian beheld afar off the Celestial city. We seated ourselves at the foot of a huge rock, and scarcely could the imagination conceive a gloomier scene. It was one wide waste of desolation, for of trees or shrubs, or even grass, there was scarce a trace.

I could not forbear picturing to myself, as I sat, the horror with which the cultivated lady of civilized life would, had she been here alone, have contemplated the savage landscape and ashy rock, expecting at each instant to see start from behind it some terrific robber, or what to the gleaming imagination of female delicacy would be worse. Yet how little reason would she have had for dread. This solemn silence, this vasty wilderness, on which God's special hand seems imprinted, would have imparted to her the fancied attributes of angels, and as she stood in radiance of beauty and elegance of habiliment, those whom she would have regarded as savages would have bowed down to her in reverence.

It is not in solitude, but in the thronged and corrupted city, where rank and its opposite, and virtue and vice, are nearly clad alike, that the lady is regarded merely as a woman,

and subjected to insult. But independent of this, respect for the female sex seems inherent in a certain state of civilization. It is the extreme of civilization which regards woman as a mere object of dalliance, and by diminishing fancy lessens that sacred reverence which is her surest protection, and man's almost only ennobling principle. It is therefore true, that we do not move straight forward in improvement, but in a churlish and irregular circle, which conducts us nearly to the place from which we set out.

We were now sufficiently rested, and proceeded forwards. A characteristic observation was made by a farmer who accompanied us, as he looked back on the rock which we were leaving behind. He wished he had it on his land, he said, for it would be a fine hiding place for the sheep, and a brave shelter for them from the storm. How a slight alteration degrades the sublime; and how strange it is to trace this homely remark to that beautiful passage in Scripture, where one is said to be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

We jested with the poor pilgrim who trudged behind us, on the folly of the errand on which she was going; for we think ourselves wise, when we only oppose our own pre-

dices to those of others. Some one said to her, "Good woman you are surely past sinning now, but I suppose you go for the sins of your youth?" "We are *a*ways sinful," said she, "when we are young, when we are middle-aged, and when we are *au*ld." "But you are too old," I said, "for such a journey, and God is no more a respecter of places than of persons, and would have heard you as well from your own mountain as from Lough Derg." "True for you," replied she, "I ken *wee*l that his eye is every where, and, blissed be his name, sees alike the chimney *reek* and the king's palace; but ough man dear, *au*ld age is a wearisome load, and I would fain move about a wee bit to lighten it."

I conversed further with the poor creature, and though possibly this was the longest journey she had ever taken, I found her rational and shrewd. I forget who it was that said that there was as much difference between the great Newton and the illiterate man, as there was between him and the animal. But whoever it was, it was foolishly said; for how many are the points in which this poor old woman and Sir Isaac Newton, were he living, would agree, compared to those in which they would differ. Cæsar was endowed with every great and shining quality that could exalt man above his fellow, yet he felt hunger and thirst and pain and passion as much, and mistook the

great object of life, which is happiness, perhaps more than the most savage Gaul whom he subdued.

We now approached the borders of the lake. It is a well-chosen place of pilgrimage, for religion is the solace of affliction, and every object there breathes of it. Surrounded by dreary mountains, which are intersected by wild glens, and over-run with brambles, it has a character of melancholy grandeur, which impresses reverence and inspires fear. In the gloomy solitude and lonely wilderness, man feels his own insignificance, and seeks in devotion, stay for his forlornness, and support in his need.

The wind had been high during the whole of the day, but it now nearly blew a storm; so that some of our party hesitated to go into the boat, and even proposed to turn back. "Turn back!" exclaimed one of the females, "without seeing what we came so far to see; why we should be laughed at to the end of our days." This argument was irresistible, for it is only in large cities that we can follow our own opinions, and do as we please. They who have lived all their lives there, can scarcely conceive how powerful is the dread of ridicule in remote and rude scenes. The inhabitants of one of the Caribbee islands rejected Christianity, for fear, they said, "that their neighbours should laugh at them;" and

I have no doubt that were it now preached for the first time in these mountains, many would say the same.

I confess that I was in the number of those who would gladly have turned back without seeing what I came so far to see; for neither my curiosity, nor my fear of being laughed at, was as great as my fear of being drowned. Independent of the weather, my mind misgave me every time that I looked at the boat, for I judged it full as likely, that even on this hallowed lake, the boatmen should be drunk as sober.

Some years ago a dreadful misfortune occurred, in consequence of mismanagement from this cause; and the boat was upset when it was within a few strokes of the oar only from the shore. There were upwards of sixty people on board, who almost all perished. One of the few who were saved, was a poor creature who had come with his mother and his wife, whom he had only married the week before. With filial affection, which will be censured or applauded, according to our different feelings, he let his wife perish, and saved his aged mother. Similarly circumstanced, I think I should have done the same; we may have many wives in the course of our lives, but we can never have but one mother.

At that period the boatmen were all Protestants, over whom the prior had no control. They have since as uniformly been Catholics,

and I learned as I was stepping into the boat, that drunkenness now never occurs. I can assure you that I stepped in the lighter for the information.

As we approached the island, we saw swarms of pilgrims performing their stations; and there was something not unpleasing in the tall gaunt figures, as, looked up to from the boat, they appeared; the varied coloured handkerchiefs with which their heads were loosely bound, waving in the mountain wind. But actually landed, the illusion of the scene almost instantaneously vanished. The holy spot had all the ruggedness of barbarity without its grandeur. The wild shrubs and brambles which decked the surrounding land and adjacent islands, were torn away, or trod under foot; and instead of those green eminences, on which fancy loves to dwell, all was bare rock which was not covered with a small chapel, and a few detached houses; or concealed by the crowd of pilgrims who stood or kneeled on it.

The imagination clothes the pilgrim with the radiance of those days when princes and nobles were of the number, and wandered over wastes and desarts, to worship their Saviour on the spot where he had purchased their salvation with his blood. The Palmer's weeds and holy branch, emblem of his devotion, come sanctified to us by the heart's

kindliest associations, and the joyful sound of peace upon earth, and good-will to all men, sounds sweeter to us as we remember, that in days long past, a musical instrument was the way-worn pilgrim's staff. But we view him with indifference, or recoil from him, even with a walking stick in his hand, and in the ordinary dress of the days in which we live.

The island is little more than an acre in circumference, and was literally strewn with the more zealous pilgrims, who on their bare knees performed their devotions, and moved about in ceaseless activity, and crossed each other in mazes intricate and intervolved, but I doubt not regular. The hum of their voices, as they repeated their prayers, and counted their rosaries, resembled the buz of bees, or the sound of flies on a summer's day. As I looked down from the crag on which I was standing, on these poor creatures, each intent on his own happiness; and upwards to the misty sky, and round on the bleak hills, on whose bare bosoms rested the grey clouds of gathering storm, I felt my heart swell with unutterable emotions, as I compared the littleness of man, with the greatness of the nature in which he moves, and has his being, and which seems not only not to regard, but even to be unknowing of him.

It was indeed a scene which John Knox, had he been living and present, would not

have contemplated with much complacency; for nothing was omitted, "even to the conjuring of the accursed water." I was myself plentifully besprinkled with it, and could it have made me as those around me were, I should gladly have been plunged in the lake. Not many years ago it was the winding-up of the pilgrimage to jump in with the clothes on. This is now altogether laid aside, as several of those poor pilgrims took a speedier road to that well of heavenly water which they thirsted after, in consequence of so rude an immersion.

The penance now I believe principally consists in repeating a number of aves and credos, and paternosters, which they ran over with incredible volubility, as if they were in a hurry to be done with them. Fasting too is rigorously practised. The general practice is to eat a morsel of bread towards noon, or to take a little oatmeal and water after sun set. Fasting has ever made a considerable part of the religious worship of the church of Rome; as Methodists and other Sectaries, possibly from the spirit of contradiction, have inclined to the opposite extreme. In the novel of Cœlebs, Mrs. Carleton, if I remember right, succeeds in the conversion of her infidel husband, by a dish dressed to his mind, when every other means had failed.

Fasting in every point of view I think is bad. Temperance is a virtue which benefits

others as well as ourselves; it leaves the poor much which excess would consume; it keeps us, both body and mind, in good health; and cherishes kindly and social affections, which gluttony destroys. Fasting, on the contrary, generates peevishness, and excites irritation and acrimony; while it materially injures the frame, which requires frequent taking in of food. Priests are more generally sufferers by this than others, for whenever the sacrament is to be administered, they must not eat; and oftentimes therefore, they do not break their fast until a late hour in the evening. The only priest with whom I had ever much acquaintance, and whose kindness to me I am glad to have this opportunity of acknowledging, owed, I am persuaded, his death to this cause alone. God help us, as if our lives were not short enough, and miserable enough, but we must make them more short, and more miserable by our observances, our penances, and our fears.

In the chapel the priests were busied in admonishing, and in other exercises of their religion; but there seemed as little solemnity in these ceremonies, as the place itself was rude and unornamented. In Ireland, the Catholic religion is unhappily stripped of all that graceful drapery and splendid decoration, which make it so dear to the fancy, and consoling to the heart; which bring before us a

higher order, where objects appear in almost inconceivable splendour; and which have rendered it so effectual a means of civilising the earth. For what would have been the condition of mankind in past ages, had it not been for the beneficial influence of this religion; which provided pictures and music for churches, and by affecting representations of Him who died on the cross, and of the sorrowing mother who followed him there, tamed their rugged natures, and softened their hard hearts; which taught the full organ to blow, to breathe a blessed spark of humanity into the dull souls of those ferocious barbarians; serving as books to the illiterate multitude, and as sermons to all ranks, to awaken the slumbering virtues of their breasts? It is scarcely too much to say, that had men been Protestants in those ages, they would be savages still. The Catholic religion, if I may so speak, is the kindly milk of man in his infancy, as the Protestant is the food of his ripening years. With what food he may be fed in his ripened ones, I shall not pause to enquire.

We now prepared to depart, and in truth I was anxious to be on shore; for I looked on the gathering foam, and listened to the jabbering cry of the wild fowl, as they flew frightened across the lake, with something like alarm. Luckily we had the company of

a priest, who was an acquaintance of some of our party, and had been very attentive to us during our stay on the island. A number of the poor people were crowding into the boat, and had they been left to themselves, it would, I dare say, have been as crowded as Charon's was, where they were sticking to the keel and oars; but the priest ordered several to go out, and his mandates were implicitly obeyed.

The distance from the island to the shore is not more than a mile, yet we were a long time in going it. At times some of the women were very unsteady, but here the authority of the priest was again of use. One poor creature sat in the bottom, unable to raise her eyes or to look round. I know not why she gave me the preference, but at each pull of the oar she clasped my knees, nor could all my efforts prevail on her to unloose them. Had any accident happened to the boat, I must have inevitably perished, and my skill in swimming, on which I was wont to plume myself, would have been of no avail.

I was well pleased to find myself at length on shore, and I think it will be an extraordinary circumstance that will induce me to visit Lough Derg again. We each paid the boatmen a shilling, and as the number of visitants as well as pilgrims is still very great, their profits must be considerable.

Several years ago the right of ferry was let

to the present occupants; but they were stoutly opposed by those who were in actual possession, and the Holy island was near being a scene, not of devotion, but of blood. These misguided people assembled their friends, laid in a store of provisions and fire-arms, and seemed resolved to maintain themselves by force. A party of soldiers were brought to dispossess them, who, to make use of a modern phrase, bivouacked during a space of two days on the adjacent hills; but unprovided as they were with boats, they found themselves under the necessity of quietly marching back again. Their antagonists were not ungenerous ones; knowing that they had suffered for want of refreshment, the boat was immediately dispatched on shore, and one of the nimblest-footed of the garrison, followed the soldiers with a keg of whiskey, which, as it had been his own, he thought would be their best cordial. He set down the keg in their sight, and trusted to the goodness of his heels to escape, should they endeavour, which it is but justice to them to say they did not, to overtake him. Shortly afterwards the besieged surrendered on gentler terms; subdued in the way recommended by Philip of Macedon, who used to say, "that no place was impregnable, into which a mule laden with silver could enter."

We returned by the way we had come.

This, as I believe I have already said, is inaccessible to all, except those who choose to walk. But there is a village called Pettigo, not more than a mile and a half from the lake, where I understand the traveller may have decent accommodation; and there is a good mountain road leading to it from Strabane, and a still better and shorter one from Enniskillen.

As we walked, we often saw groups of pilgrims ascending and descending the hills; and were occasionally joined by a few straggling ones. They seemed all in great spirits, and with their hearts as light and disburthened as their consciences. Their pockets I fear were equally disburthened; for a jolly-looking young man told us with a laugh, that between the prior, the boatmen, and a little offering to St. Patrick, he had not as much left as would jingle on a tomb-stone, was his strange expression, or get him a drap of the *native* at Killala. "*Bene*," said I, turning to the priest, "*vester beatus Patricius est bonus in auxilio, sed cavus in negotio.*" "*Bene, doctissime, bene dixisti,*" exclaimed a little ragged fellow, starting forwards, and speaking away with fluency, which I should in vain have endeavoured to rival.

This little ragged personage was what is called here a *poor* scholar; by which is meant a rare and extraordinary one, who studies

behind hedges and in ditches, teaches boys while he is still a boy himself, and from time to time has small collections made for him at wakes and funerals, to help him in his studies. Sorrow in these mountains is more liberal than joy, for scarcely is there a Catholic burial without some contribution from those who attend it, while nothing is ever given at christenings or weddings. We gave the poor creature a trifle, and gave likewise something to his companion, to enable him to taste at Killala the liquor which he loved. Without derogating from his devotion, I doubt not that the spirits of the village would be at the least as acceptable to him as the waters of the lake.

The priest accompanied us home to dinner, and I was glad, for he was a rational man, and a cheerful companion. We conversed on a variety of subjects, and I found him liberal, beyond what I should have expected in a mountain-priest. His ideas on pilgrimage were almost the same as my own; and I should give them to you in his own words, but that I can give them in far better ones. Nor do I mean by this to disparage him, for is there a living person who could express himself in words such as these?

"Pilgrimage, like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed.

Long journeys in search of truths are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys these awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition, but that some places may operate upon our minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will perhaps find himself mistaken, yet he may go thither without folly; for he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours at once his reason and religion."

LETTER XXIII.

Ardstraw.

I was detained by my kind hostesses some days longer than I had intended, yet at the last I went away with regret. So capricious is the human heart, that I became fond of solitude the moment that I was to leave it. Our horse seemed to go with equal reluctance, and at last fairly stood still. Upon examination we found he had lost a shoe. I had foreseen the likelihood of this disaster, and advertised our driver of it, but he disregarded my admonitions. "Never fear," said he, as the invariable expression is, until misfortune actually happens; "I'll indent for it that that shoe would carry us from Dublin to Derry." It carried us exactly one half mile. However, evil in some measure works its own cure; and it is so common a mischance here to drop shoes, that smiths' forges are to be found at every turn.

We found one at Killeter Bridge, and sauntered on while the shoe was replacing. Some men were repairing a wall by the road-side, and we stopped a few moments looking on

them. Among the stones was a particular kind of one, of a soft substance and irregular form, which, when by accident they took up, they always threw down again. "Curse the Sarsanagh," said one of them, "I wish it would stay till it is wanted." — "Pray," said I, "does not Sarsanagh mean Saxon?" — "True for you," replied he. — "And are Saxon stones," I asked, "worse for building with than others?" — They are not for building at all," said he, "for as sure as you trust to them, by Gough they will deceive you."

Before we had driven far, we were forced by a shower to take shelter in a cabin. It was a wretched one, but a large fire was blazing on the hearth-stone; and two women sat crouching over it. A love of ease is so natural to us, that I know not whether on the whole we are not better with it than with much labour, and a wider range of enjoyments, of which we do not feel the loss, when we have never known them. Circumstances compel the English people to a life almost of perpetual labour; I fear they are not the more happy, and I am sure they are not the more virtuous on that account.

These poor women spoke English to us, but in Irish to each other. The Irish language has been praised as a soft and musical one; but as far as I can judge by the lower

classes, whom alone I have heard speak it, it is harsh and rude, filled with guttural sounds, and a difficult combination of consonants. It is said to contain many of those imitative words which convey an idea of things by the sound; and, like almost all languages in their infant state, it is full of images, and paints objects to the eye, rather than represents them to the mind.

I presume after they had exhausted themselves in conjectures, one of the women said to me; — "I know, surr, that the ladies and that little boy are this country people, but *a* guess you are *na* an Ireland man." — "Yes," I replied, "I am an Irishman, bred like yourselves on the potatoe ridge, and perhaps I had done better never to have quitted it." — "The Redeemer save us," exclaimed they, "to think that a gentleman like you should be a Roman, and not be ashamed to tell it before us mountain folk; but I suppose you are fr*a* Dublin or Cork, where all the t*a*p quality gang to chapel?" — "I am neither from Dublin nor Cork," I said, "but from Strabane, in your own neighbourhood; nor am I a Roman, but an Irishman, as I have told you, or an Ireland man, if you like the term better." This made us understand each other; for you must know that an Irishman means a Catholic, or a Roman as he is some-

times called, and an Ireland man, one that is born here.

I tire you with melancholy moralizing, but can I forbear, when even in the mountain-hovel, the name of Roman is regarded as one to be ashamed of? Oh, could Cicero have been present, and have heard this! Or, to bring the matter nearer to ourselves, could an Englishman of the present generation, when generations on generations have passed away, return upon earth, and behold his silver Thames choaked with ruins, and his cherished name borne by ferocious savages, or effeminate and superstitious slaves! Yet this he probably should behold, for every thing is fleeting on this side of the grave, and the change, great as it would be, would not be greater than that which has already been. "In my youth," said Petrarch, "the English were the most cowardly of all the barbarians, inferior even to the vile Scotch!"

These poor women seemed not the less civil for our not being of their religion; and as they had before given us their stools, they now brought, without being asked, my little nephew a bowl of milk. This I have no doubt was disinterested civility, for never, but once, was I solicited for any thing in an Irish cabin; and scarcely ever, let me add, did I shelter myself in a Welsh one, that money was not

sought for, either directly or indirectly. We gave these poor creatures something to buy tobacco, which is here the great luxury of the poor. Like all other narcotics, it in some measure renders them independent of their situation, and produces a pleasurable train of thought, which makes them happy within themselves. It is a species of incense which intoxicates them on their lowly stools, as the Delphic vapour of old did the Pythoness; and, preferable to the forbidden fruit, gives contentment; which is better than the knowledge of the gods.

At present, tobacco is used sparingly by the poor; and many have been obliged to give it up altogether. Taxation produces many evils, and I regard this as not the least of them. Smoking humanizes the heart, which drunkenness hardens; and I have generally found that tobacco, like tea, produces sobriety. I do not know that I ever here saw an instance of people smoking and drinking strong drink at the same time; water or milk was the only beverage made use of.

We passed slowly by Castle Gore, which, beneath the dark clouds and murky sky, looked even more forlorn than when we had passed it last: the spider wove its web on the shattered windows, and the owl built its nest on the ruined towers. I turned round, and took a long, and most likely, last look of it. It is a

melancholy look that last, were it even the last look of a prison; and we then behold with love, what we had before beheld with indifference. Alas! the rather because it is a grand notch in the wilderness of Time, which, by telling us how far we have travelled, reminds us how little we shall travel more.

After passing through Derg, we turned on a cross road which leads to this place. Either the road was very bad, or our tackling weak, or possibly from both these causes combined, it broke as we were going up a hill, and we were very near being tumbled in the mire. Luckily it happened near a farm house, and the farmer, who had seen the accident, came immediately down to us. It was further lucky that he was an acquaintance, and had once been a patient of my own. He was either well pleased to see me, or he counterfeited well.

"God guide us, Doctor dear," said he, "who thought of seeing you in these parts? I thought you were gone to France, and the Lord knows where else besides." "And I thought," replied I, "that you were gone to America, where you talked of going when I was here last." "True for you," said he, "and had next to taken my passage in Derry, but truth to say, when it came to the pinch, the wife cowed, and did not choose to leave

her old bones so far from home; may be under a currant bush, or beside a cabbage stalk, for that's the way, I am told, they bury there; so I even let myself be persuaded, and came back to the old spot again, which, as it has done me sixty-two years to live in, may do me well enough for a place to die."

We accompanied him into the house, where he set some refreshment before us; the whiskey was not omitted, and he pressed me heartily to drink of it. "You need not fear it, doctor," said he, "for it's good, and it's old, and dear let me never gang, if I dont wish that it was wine at half-a-guinea a quart, for your sake."

Having tasted it to gratify him, I went with him into an adjacent room, where a niece of his wife's, he told me, lay dangerously ill; and truly he told me, for she was almost in the last stage of a consumption. Poor dying creature! she had more occasion for an undertaker, than a doctor; and, by the conversation, one might have supposed that I was one. Her uncle talked of the funeral, — the church-yard she was to be buried in, — and the tomb-stone that was to be put over her head, as he would have done to any indifferent person; and what was not less extraordinary, the poor woman joined eagerly in the conversation. "Now mind," said she, "let the coffin-

bearers have head scarfs, and be sure to send shoulder ones to the clergy and doctor."

I would have put an end to this shocking conversation; but she went on, looking earnestly up, and grasping my hand with her clammy one. "Pass your word to me, before this gentleman," continued she, "that you won't carry me to your own burying ground, but lay me in Tobayne, where all my forebearers are before me, or I'll not get rest in the grave." Consciousness is so interwoven with our nature, that we can scarcely divest ourselves of the idea, but that it will go with us to the tomb. "An odd thought strikes me," said the great and good Doctor Johnson, as he opened a note on his death bed; "we shall receive no letters in the grave."

Distressing as it was to witness such a scene, I knew the country too well not to be aware how common is this embracement, as it were of death, by sick and aged persons. Time doubtless has wrought changes, but scarcely was there, a few years ago, an old Presbyterian woman that did not make up her dead dress with her own hands, and lay it carefully apart, with a direction to the particular drawer in which, when the awful hour came it was wanted, it should be found. The Catholics, on the contrary, more social and less spiritual, are most interested about their wake, and even in the arms of dissolution

seem to receive gratification from the idea that it shall be well attended, and that the company shall be well attended to. Not many years ago, a poor man, in the parish of Lifford, sent his wife, the day before his death, into Strabane to buy candles, which is an important article on such an occasion. She brought out a couple of pounds of fine mould ones; and joy sparkled in the dying man's faded eye, as raising himself on his elbow he looked admiringly on them. "Oh! by my troth woman," said he, "they would do to wake his majesty."

When I got my friend out of the room, I rebuked him for the thoughtlessness of his conduct. "How could you be so unfeeling?" I said; "your niece it is true is dying, and nothing that we now do can be of further consequence, than to make her few remaining hours easy; but really if her complaints were merely nervous ones, you would be enough to kill her yourself; and you are as bad as a death's head placed upon her pillow, or a hearse and plumes paraded before her window." "Augh! Augh!" replied he, "what new-fangled notions are these; must'nt we all die whether we talk of it or no, and it's not for you, above all men, to be so mealy-mouthed about death, for in troth, not to say it to your face, you are good and you are come from good. There were the Hender-

sons and the Lairds, all godly people, that died like Christians, and lived on earth as if they were in heaven: I don't myself remember Mr. Laird, the clergyman of Donoughmore, though I have often heard speak of him; but there was your old grandmother Henderson, whom I do remember, that went to sleep full of hopes as of years, and talked of death as if it was only crossing the burn; and there was your own good father, who, when the news of his getting a prize in the lottery was brought him, was reading a sermon, and would'nt listen to a word until he had done." "I have heard so," said I. "It is true," continued he, "and I could tell you more too. By the bye," continued he, rambling off to a new subject, "our neighbourhood has been lucky in lottery tickets, for, to say nothing of your old uncle Sproulle, who got a thousand pounds, there was Squire Cowan, of Lifford, who got the grand prize in the English lottery; but may be you have heard all about it." "No," I replied, though I had, and often had; but I was willing to continue him on this subject, for what he had before said had made me sad. Who shall dare say that he himself is good? but it is a truth that I am descended from good people, and who still live, if the life of the dead be, as Cicero has said, in the memory of the living.

His little story of Squire Cowan, as he

called him, is not undeserving of being retold. Mr. Cowan, at the period he alluded to, was a student at the Temple, but desirous of a shorter road than law to riches, he purchased a lottery ticket. It happened that he was accompanied by an acquaintance, a native likewise of Strabane, and they had not gone far from the office when this gentleman suddenly stopped. "I saw a number there," said he, "which I wish with all my soul you had purchased, for my mind tells me that it will be a lucky one." "Nonsense," said Mr. Cowan, laughing, "all numbers are lucky till the drawing begins, as all girls are good until they are married, yet there are blanks, as well as bad wives." However, the companion was importunate, and prevailed on him to return; he asked for the lucky number, and the office-keeper civilly exchanged it for the other one. It was the then celebrated though long forgotten number of forty-five, and it proved to be the capital prize. How the fortunate possessor, as doubtless he regarded himself, rejoiced, may be conceived; but we know too little of futurity to tell what is for our advantage in this life, and good and bad fortune seem so equally balanced, that it was customary with the ancients to wish for some trifling evil, when they had experienced some mighty good. "Grant me ye Gods," exclaimed Philip of Macedon, when good news was pouring on

him, "Grant me some slight misfortune." Even here I have heard people say with an expression of pleasure, when any petty mischance had befallen them, "There let all my ill-luck go along with it."

Mr. Cowan's fortunate prize, to all human appearance, was the cause of his destruction, and was one link only in that indissoluble chain which bound him, as we are all bound, from birth unto death. He relinquished his profession, and settled himself in business in London, where he resided on my first youthful journey there.

A summer or two afterwards he was at Brighton or Margate, I do not remember which; and one fine evening he went out in a boat, accompanied by a young gentleman of the name of Mr. Causland, from this neighbourhood. Trusting to their own skill for its management, they took no boatmen with them; but woefully must they have mismanaged, for never were they heard of afterwards, nor was the boat even ever found. Their relations long flattered themselves with the hope that they were driven on the coast of France or Holland, and that they would return again; but they were driven on that undiscovered coast, from which no travellers return.

By this time the harness was repaired, and we again set forwards; our kind-hearted host,

as courtesy required, walking by the side of the car until we should be past his grounds. "Do you see that spot," said he to me, pointing to a shallow ditch by the road side. "Yes," I replied. "In that very ditch," resumed he, "did I one grey morning, four-and-forty years ago come Hallow-eve, find the bags and letters for Strabane, and money enough in them, I'll be bound for it, besides." "How came they there," I asked, "had the mail been robbed?" "Mail," repeated he, "Lord love you, no, there were no mails in those days, nor robberies for that matter neither; the big dragon was'nt let loose then as he has since been; but Jemmy Lafferty, old Robin Porter's drunken post, had fallen asleep on his wee horse's back, as he was accustomed to do, and some how or other was brought hither from the great road. By the same token here he lay himself, and there lay his hat and wig, and here little Sketty, that had more wit than he had, was quietly grazing." "Well," said I, "you awoke Jemmy, I suppose." "Woke him," repeated he, "that the great bell in Derry church could'nt have done, till the drunken body had his nap out; but I mounted Sketty myself; no rheumatics then, Doctor, and took bags, letters, and money into Strabane. Old Robin you may guess, was right glad to see me, asked me in to breakfast, and was very kind to me ever afterwards; you

mind old Robin don't you?" "Perfectly," I replied, "he was married to an aunt of my mother's." "True for you," said he, "and a brave family he had, that are now all dead and gone; and there was his nephew too, I well mind him, that went to England and married a lady there; but she was'nt like other English ladies, for I have heard say she was poor." "At all events," said I, "she was not poor in good gifts, for she brought him a fine family of sons and daughters." "Fine," repeated he, "I have heard the contrary, one of them I am told does no earthly thing in the house, but sits the live-long day in her room, writing novels and plays, and such like nonsense." "Both of them write novels, my good friend," I replied, "and weave tales of sorrow as long as one of your three quarter wide webs, that draw tears from young ladies' eyes, and would from your own old ones, if you would but read them." "Would they," said he, "then I won't read them, for we have sorrow enough in the world without going to books in quest of it; but in troth I am sorry that their father's daughters should turn out so ill." "I did not think," said I, "that you were such an enemy to learning." "Nor am I," said he, "but every thing in its own way; you are a doctor now, for instance, and may be as learned, and make as many books as you

will; but what learning does a woman want more than reading the bible, and the five golden rules?" "Well," said I, "I'll give up the daughters, but I can tell you good news of your old friend's son; do you know that he is married to a grand princess?" "So I have heard," replied he, "but she is not of the blood royal." "Better man," said I, "she is a great Russian lady, with as much fur about her as would stock your farm, and with an estate as large as the county you live in." "I dare say," resumed he, "that he has made a great match of it, but I never yet knew much good come of unevenly ones, and may be he would have done just as well, to have married a woman like himself, as his good father did before him; an honest man he was as ever broke bread, and I would take his chance of Heaven, before that of ever a prince or princess of them all." We then shook hands and parted, but not until I had promised to come shortly back, and pass a day or two with him.

In the gloom of my writing, and liveliness, perhaps levity of my discourse, there is a curious, and I fear an unpleasing contrast. But pleasing or unpleasing, I cannot help it; for the same disposition which makes me mourn over the destiny of man, makes me smile at his folly, and mock at his pursuits. Besides, travelling exhilarates me; and I am

scarcely ever melancholy, except when I am within doors.

We passed through Magheranigan, which I remember as wealthy and populous a village, as it seems now a poor and deserted one. However, it is prettily situated, and there is a long avenue of trees leading to it, which in this country is a sight as beautiful as it is rare. Ireland was thickly planted by the hand of nature, but hitherto man has little replaced, what he so prodigally wasted. "Of this improvidence," to use the words of a great writer, "no other account can be given, than that it probably began in times of tumult, and continued because it had begun." "Established custom," continues he, "is not easily broken, till some great event shakes the whole system of things, and life seems to begin again upon new principles." If planting follows the shaking of the system here, it is an event which many will regard as not a remote one.

A little way from this village is a cottage house, which was formerly occupied by a distant relation of my own; but his circumstances became improved, and instantly he deserted the mansion of his fathers, to seek a larger one. The country people here, I regret to say, have as yet little idea of pastoral beauty, or ornament of any kind. Their grand ambition is to dwell in a two story house, and whenever they have saved a little money, instead of

laying it out in the improvement of their little habitations, they go and build large ones, which, from failure of means, and habitual dilatoriness, long remain mishapen and unfinished masses, and, as far as the upper apartments are concerned, probably never are finished. Independent of the general folly of such conduct, it is particularly foolish in the North of Ireland, where almost everlasting storms descend from the mountains, and sweep along the valleys and lakes; and where the greatest and most exalted, if he studied his own comfort and convenience, would live in a cottage rather than in a castle. How delightful too is a cottage, and how easily and cheaply is it ornamented! A bank of violets before the door, or the woodbine twined into an arch, is more beautiful than the colonnade or arcade; and the rose in the maiden's hair, which she can pluck from every bush, is sweeter than the diamond which sparkles in the court lady's head.

Of this infatuation for house-building, I had a short while ago a striking and melancholy instance. A worthy man, an intimate acquaintance, led, or rather dragged me all over a house he was building, pointing out the neatness of the mason and carpenter work, solacing himself with the applause which he should receive when it was completed, and living in the mean time in the utmost wretch-

edness, in the midst of lath and plaister, in an uncieled room, and on a damp earthen floor. Ostentatiously he had put the date of the year he had begun building, upon a stone over his door. Alas, it was likewise that of his death, for three weeks only after he had led me with such exultation, through his roomy and spacious mansion, he was laid in his narrow and everlasting one. It is not incurious to remark, that he was sixty-eight years of age at the time, and that even according to his own calculation, his house would not have been finished in less than two years. "It is too late," as Crassus said to king Dejotarus, "to begin to build at the twelfth hour."

We arrived at this place about six in the evening; but as we were not expected that particular day, dinner was long over. However we were at no loss after our mid-day collation, and tea was the most acceptable meal to us. Doctor Boerhaave used to say, "that the poor were the best patients, because God was their paymaster;" and if they are, I had that very evening abundance of them. I do not mean to give you a lecture on medicine, but I must notice the case of one. He had dined the day before on salmon, and immediately afterwards drank a bowl of rich cream; in the course of the night he had a violent feverish paroxysm, which in all likelihood would have terminated in some fatal internal

inflammation, but for a deep florid eruption, which came out over his entire body. Nature puts limits to our enjoyments, and as we can never fully gratify two senses at the same time, so neither can we gratify one beyond certain straightened bounds; there is in truth as wonderful a relation of tastes and ailments, and of ailment and ailments to each other, as there is of colours and sounds. They are agreeable or disagreeable, only in proportion to their natural or unnatural combinations. An arbitrary combination produces disgust rather than pleasure; for the relation which every aliment, as well as every colour and sound, bear to each other, is as immutably established as the order of the world in which we live, or of the heavenly bodies over our heads. Bread and meat, meat and salt, meats and vegetables, harmonize kindly with each other on the stomach and the tongue; while fish and flesh, fish and milk, and various other objects of human aliment, when combined, are offensive and injurious.

I am here in a large farm house, and last night I was a witness of a little rural festival; a kind of minor harvest home, though under a different name. It was called a Churn, which shows the simple and almost patriarchal mode of life which has prevailed here. In these remote parts, the cow until lately, rarely afforded other food than her milk, which,

cooked and prepared in various ways, is a diet as wholesome as it is delicious. This merry making was not on account of the general, but of the flaxen harvest, which is now happily got in, and which in this land of linen, is an important one.

There seemed from twelve to fifteen rugged sons of labour assembled on the occasion. The table was plentifully covered with oaten-cakes, butter, and cheese; for the cheese here is in general so poor, that butter is always eaten with it. A number of wooden vessels, called noggins, were filled with milk or cream, and there was a particular description of the latter, known here under the appellation of pedlar's cream. It is the churned milk, after the large masses of butter are taken off, but with the smaller particles floating through it. I presume it was the favourite beverage of the itinerant gentry, whose name it bears, and as readily accepted as it was cordially offered, on their welcome arrival at the farm-house, where they condescended to stop for the night. Nor was the liquor of liquors omitted; for there were two large jugs of whiskey, one at the upper, and the other at the lower end of the table. A glass of this was occasionally taken in its undiluted state. Given I should rather say, for these good people were not to be trusted with the whiskey as they were with the milk;

else our feast might have ended like that of the Lapithæ, in blood.

A part of the evening I was an undiscovered eye-witness, and almost the whole of it, I was an ear-witness of their merriment. Had I appeared, I should in all likelihood have put an end to it; for whether or no it be true, that forwardness makes a part of the genuine Irish character, the Northern character, as far at least as my observations go, is rather designated by bashfulness, or even sheepishness.

The first effect of the whiskey was to unloose their tongues in story-telling; but on these I can bestow no praise. They resembled the worst half of old Flamborough's, for they were very long and very dull, not only not about themselves, but not about any order of things or beings that ever existed. They seemed all of Eastern origin, combined with the vulgar mythology of faires, and presented the magic and enchantments of Arabian tales, transfigured by village narration, and degraded by rustic language and homely circumstances.

After story-telling, they proceeded to song-singing, and here they were more successful, for some of them had good voices, and sang good songs. Yet of these not one was Irish in its words, tune, or associations; so much is nationality extinguishing, or so much, in liquor, does Nature triumph over accident.

With a few exceptions, they were of death, and without an exception they were melancholy. How general must be the perception of misery, when joy even, if I may so speak, is joyless, and merry-making, melancholy; and that too in conditions of life which are supposed to be the freest from care; and that the songs of the ruddy labourer who ploughs the earth, as of the hardy sailor who ploughs the ocean, should be of woe, wailing, disaster and death? The following is a verse of one of these poor creature's songs: —

"Why should the rich despise the poor,
Or should the poor repine;
Soon shall the rich, and soon the poor,
In equal fortune join.
Then whilst we are here, my friends so dear,
Let's drive dull care away."

This latter was the chorus, and then they all stood up and joined hands together, as if to strengthen themselves against the thoughts, which in the midst of feasting, came like the foul and loathsome harpies to empoison their joy.

LETTER XXIV.

Strabane.

I WENT to the country to be rid of the trouble of the assizes, and now that I am returned, I am in the midst of it. There is an adjourned one to be held to-morrow at Lifford, for the trial of a man of the name of Maginnis, and of several of his accomplices, for the murder of an unfortunate being of the name of Balfour. Their trials, I have no doubt, will be interesting; and since I am here, I shall go over at least one of the days. It imposes a task, and a wearisome one upon me, for to render the proceedings intelligible to you, I must enter on a long, and I fear tiresome discussion. However, it will make you better acquainted with the state of this country, than perhaps any other subject I could enter on.

There seems a natural and instinctive fondness, in the inhabitants of damp and mountainous places, for ardent spirits; and perhaps, every where, in vacant and unemployed minds, there is similar fondness; for a love of sensation seems the strongest appetite or

passion of our nature. For the purpose of speedy intoxication, whiskey is superlative; and when, to physical and other general causes, are added the more powerful moral ones of his condition, it is little wonderful that the Irish peasant should seek in the Lethean draught, oblivious happiness; and regard the inventor of his beloved liquor, as a greater benefactor than Ceres and Triptolemus put together.

Yet it is certain that there was a time, and not a very remote one neither, when whiskey was very little used by the respectable inhabitants of the North of Ireland. They are not, you will remember, a purely Irish people; they are the descendants of Scotch, with Scotch manners and customs, and above all, professing the Scotch religion. It is a curious circumstance, and evinces how little speculative opinions influence practice, that the religion which, above all others, undervalues morality, should produce by far the most moral men. The presbyterians of Ulster were honest, industrious, rigid observers of the sabbath, and, though last, not least, inflexibly sober. Claret was the drink of the higher, and probably, on extraordinary occasions, of the middle classes. This might easily have been, for they were as comfortable in their circumstances, as they were contented with their condition; and I have often heard an

old wine-merchant say, that he sold his first dozen of claret for thirteen shillings.

Milk was the ordinary beverage, and ale the ordinary luxury. Every family brewed their own, and in consequence it was wholesome and strong; while now, not a drop that even can be called middling is to be found. So little, in those days, was whiskey made use of, that I have often heard my mother say, that, during the whole time she lived with her grandfather, and she was reared by him, he had not, she was convinced, made use of a single quart of spirits. Nor was this peculiar to him, but a tolerably faithful representation of the general state of society.

A delightful state it was, as it has been often represented to me, though perhaps by a partial relator; for age, while it casts the grave shadows on its few remaining years, decks with the rainbow's choicest colours its youthful ones. But, making every allowance for this disposition, so natural and at times so consolatory, if ever there were a happy people upon earth, it was the inhabitants of the North of Ireland, about the times I am writing of. Money was plenty, rents were moderate, and taxes and lawsuits were almost unknown. There was no necessity then for that feverish activity, which has since robbed the life of ordinary men of all enjoyment, and made his days either toilsome labour, or death-

like repose; but work alternated alike with rest and pleasure, and though Sunday was so religiously observed, that no dinner was dressed on that day, every season brought with it a long train of festivals and holidays, which the village youths and maidens passed in sport and rejoicing, and the higher and middle classes in feasting and visiting. For, united together by common descent and interest, by common feeling and prejudice, and nearly alike strangers to the refinements of luxury, and cravings of vanity, landlord and tenant lived together in social intercourse, and nearly on a footing of equality.

The husbandman tilled the ground in the midst of homely and hearty plenty, which not only poured abundance on his servants and labourers, but on the wandering beggar who came within his gate; for, regularly each season, a portion of the fruits of the earth was laid aside for the purposes of charity; which not only relieved distress, but, like oil poured on the troubled lake, soothed wounded feeling, and assuaged religious animosity; and, while it blessed the Protestant giver, doubly blessed the Catholic receiver; who, as free and unconstrained he trod his blue hills, and inhaled the air of his native mountains, forgot in the exhilaration of nature, his wrongs and his sufferings; and might have been an object of envy to an English pauper, or even manufac-

turer, pent up in darksome dwellings, and with minds still more crippled than bodies.

Nor was there a superfluity alone, for the beggar who roamed the earth, but for the beasts of the field, and the birds of heaven. A penurious farmer, who had killed a poor horse when no longer able to labour, was a subject of universal wonder; and a scare-crow put up by another, was torn down with contempt, and he himself rebuked for his ingratitude to that heaven which had fed him so kindly; while he denied a few grains of corn to the sparrow, which no more than he, could fall without its notice, to the ground.

These were the golden days of the North of Ireland; too good to last, and never, I fear, to return. For no matter what may be, at times, our condition, care is our only permanent possession; and we tire even of happiness, as the Athenians tired of hearing Aristides called just. About forty years ago, the presbyterians of Ulster, who, humanly speaking, had so few real evils to complain of, heated their fancies with, I could almost say, imaginary ones. They associated in large and armed bodies, under the denomination of Volunteers, and having, by their formidable array, dispelled all dread of the invasion with which they were threatened, they still continued together, to free themselves from the supposed political grievances of their situa-

tion. Men thus brought together in armed masses, and intoxicated with political enthusiasm, could hardly fail to add the farther intoxication of drink; and every field-day or review was a holiday, which was concluded by feasting and merriment. Their officers too, who were elected by them, and owed all their importance to their popularity, vied with each other in treating and regaling them, and feasting and merriment soon became carousing and drunkenness.

By the display of her force, Ulster at that time obtained privileges, which, in all probability would never have been yielded to her solicitations. Far be it from me to undervalue those privileges which have placed my countrymen on the equality with their fellow-subjects, which they so well deserved; but they were counterbalanced by numerous evils, as hereafter perhaps I may show you. One great evil was, that drunkenness, which otherwise might have been but transient and temporary, became permanent and fixed. Ireland, and in a particular manner Ulster, was now become a subject of terror and apprehension to Government. A large army was maintained, and corruption was resorted to, and places were multiplied, to obtain by influence that predominance which, as far as the Protestants were concerned, had so long rested on opinion.

Taxes were laid on to an amount before unknown, while trade increased little or none at all, and Ireland, were the comparison not too ludicrous, might be thus compared to Sir Francis Wronghead, who had the expectation of a place, and whose wife immediately asked him for a hundred pounds.

One of the modes of raising these taxes was an increase of the duty on wines, and particularly on French wines. Claret, in consequence, became too expensive for general use; but as pride will seldom submit to plead poverty as a reason for change, it was all at once discovered that claret was ill adapted to so damp a climate, and a great deal too cold for an Irish stomach. Like the boy in the fable who called wolves till they came in good earnest, fiction in the end became truth. The heat of whiskey has made claret as much too cold for the stomach, as the unwise policy of Government has made it too expensive for the pocket.

It was long a popular opinion, that in some remote corner of the earth, there was a well of enchanted water, which, drank of, prevented decay, or renewed youth. Not in a remote corner, but on a coast a few leagues only from our own shores, is to be found an admirable liquor, which, though it does not renew youth, prolongs it, and sweetens and prolongs life. Yet we scornfully reject Na-

ture's kindly boon, and in our hatred to a great nation, nearly rival the madman, who, to revenge himself on his enemy, came home and hanged himself.

As claret was thus rendered too expensive, so beer became unfashionable, and whiskey, for our misfortune, remained almost the exclusive liquor. About the time that these changes took place, it was generally made in small stills, which almost instantaneously multiplied in every town and village. It is probable they contributed little to the happiness or morality of the neighbourhood, but they certainly contributed to its wealth; the country people found at their own doors a ready market for their grain, they paid their rents more easily, and landlord and tenant were alike contented.

Government now interfered; and it seems the fate of Government, as much or more, to injure by interference as by inaction. It is probable they found that the duties were imperfectly collected, and at a considerable expence; but whether from these or other considerations, they discouraged small stills, and only licensed large ones. As these were fettered with heavy duties, and required large capitals to work them, it was presumed they would be almost exclusively confined to large towns, where the excise officers could better discharge their duty. But it might have been

foreseen that the Irish, little disposed to obey, and still less to reverence the laws, would not all at once give up their favourite liquor, to drink at a higher price a worse one, or that men accustomed to an easy and sure mode of making money, would relinquish it without a struggle.

In reality, and as if in mockery of the sagacity of Government, stills multiplied to a degree that is scarcely conceivable; and, forbidden to work in villages or publickly, they were wrought in bogs and mountains. These stills were of the slightest materials, and so small that a man of ordinary strength could, in case of necessity, take one of them on his shoulder and run over heath and morass, that the unaccustomed would little like to follow him on.

In consequence of the increasing use of this borbidden liquor, the defalcation in the revenue must have been enormous, and the Legislature passed several laws, a few of them perhaps founded in wisdom, but by far the greater number in folly, for Government was irritated by disappointment, and passion is the worst of all counsellors. Of these laws, one was founded in the grossest injustice, and it should be carefully studied by those Englishmen who so much undervalue the Governments of other countries, for the same reason

that monks contemplate death's heads, as a lesson of humility, and an antidote to pride.

By this law, excisemen were authorised to levy fines on town lands, which are a division of parishes, where stills should be found; and were enabled to put to great expense, and oftentimes to involve in ruin and beggary, the innocent as well as the guilty, the absent as well as the present; the aged and infirm, as well as the young and active offenders. Nor was this all, and these devoted town lands were equally liable to fine and punishment, whether the still was working or idle, whether it was found in the still-house, or on the bleak bog or lonely mountain; where, perhaps, it was cast down by villainy for the sake of reward, by hatred from the desire of vengeance, or by fear at the sight of the gaugers.

Whether or no in consequence of this law, it is certain that Government in a measure put a stop to private distillation in the low lands, where their power could easily reach and be exerted; but it only raged the more in those dreary bogs and pathless mountains, where almost every cabin was a still-house, and every person a centinel, who announced the approach of the exciseman, long before he arrived. To visit these mountains, unless accompanied by armed men, would have been his certain destruction, and he was therefore constantly attended by a party of soldiers, which rendered

it almost impossible for him to come on the distillers unawares.

It may be noticed as a pigmy evil among many mighty ones, that this service induced an almost complete relaxation of discipline. Like the hunted castor, the flying mountaineers, found in some measure within themselves, the means of eluding their enemies, and left portions of their whiskey scattered behind them, which, new and fiery as it was, was greedily swallowed by the jaded and exhausted soldiers. When the English militia were here, it was no unusual matter for them to tumble down senseless on the heath, from the effects of a liquor to which they were so little accustomed. I have not heard of any instance of these straggling and intoxicated soldiers being ill treated; on the contrary, they were generally taken into some of the poor people's cabins, where they lay until they had slept themselves sober.

After the Government which employed them, the excisemen were the great objects of hatred; and whenever the mountain people had them in their power, they were sure to beat them unmercifully. In some instances, these beatings were followed by death; but it does not appear, that death, in this neighbourhood at least, was intended.

I palliate not such outrages, but I fear it is too true that the duty of the exciseman, which

was harsh enough in itself, was often harshly and rudely executed. He was an object of hatred to the lower class, of mistrust to the middle, and of dislike to all. The gentry and clergy, as rarely as they could, supported, and never associated with him. Probably they were not unwilling to pay their court in this easy manner to the people; and it would be idle to deny, but that they were perfectly sensible, that the traffic in whiskey facilitated the getting in of their rents and tithes. Indeed it is not too much to say, that without it, they would not of late years have been got in at all, nor would they ever have been at their present high rates.

With these causes operating, the exciseman maltreated and abused, sometimes with wanton barbarity; arrogant in power, and certain of being supported, his pistol was promptly drawn forth, and too often, it is to be feared, wantonly fired.

Every where around me there was more or less of this violence, but the particular seat of it for some time past, has been the barony of Innishowen. This district has long been famous for its whiskey, and has even become a name for the liquor itself; real Innishowen is its highest praise, and nothing in the way of panegyric can be added to this. The people were numerous, as well as firmly united together, by the trade which made them rich, so

that the excisemen could not show themselves among them as elsewhere, accompanied by a small party of soldiers only, but required oftentimes a company of foot, and sometimes a troop of horse.

Under these circumstances, the Excise Board arrayed itself in all the terrors of the law which I have mentioned, and had it rigorously put in force. To recount all the excesses, outrages, and injustice, which were in consequence committed, would require a volume rather than a letter; and it would be an odious and offensive one. The re-action of the evils which were inflicted, as almost ever happens, fell on those who inflicted them. The passions of the people became inflamed almost to madness, and bore down every consideration before them. Associations were formed for the destruction or murder of their oppressors, as they judged them; and among the foremost of those, was reckoned a Mr. Norton Butler.

This unfortunate gentleman had formerly been an officer in some regiment of militia, but for some years had resided in Innishowen. Whether from zeal for the government he had served, or from selfish considerations, he had made himself very obnoxious by his activity; and though frequently admonished of the danger of his situation, he continued fearlessly

to inhabit a lonely country-house. He the rather disregarded these admonitions, as he relied greatly on the popularity of his wife, who was a most benevolent woman, and beloved by all the neighbourhood. But a good wife, though one of our best possessions, was but a feeble protection in so agitated a state of the public mind, and one summer's evening he was cruelly murdered, a few paces only from his own garden, where he had strolled with his pipe in his mouth. Several of the country people who witnessed his fall, testified, it is said, their joy, by loud cheerings; and the assassins coolly and deliberately walked away.

At the spring assizes of 1817, one of these wretched men was tried and convicted, I believe, on the most satisfactory evidence. He had long been skulking about the country, and but for that unaccountable infatuation attendant upon crime, he might, wandering as he was upon the very shores of the Atlantic, have easily escaped to America. Such however was the strong sympathy throughout the whole country in his favour, such the detestation in which the character of an informer is held in Ireland, that he might long have remained in safety even where he was, had not chance brought in his way a former companion of the name of Balfour, who was just released from

Lifford gaol, and who lived by the reward offered, gave the information which led to his apprehension.

For this unparalleled act of treachery as it was reckoned, Balfour was shortly doomed to expiate with his life. With folly far beyond that of the other, he continued to reside in the country where he was so odious, and was one night murdered, by a party regularly brought together for the purpose.

It is for this murder, that the brother of the man who was executed, and who is the Magin.is I have mentioned, is, with several others, now to be tried. So strong it is thought is the evidence against them, that scarce a doubt is entertained of their conviction. How this may be I shall soon have an opportunity of judging. In the mean time I cannot help deploring the unfortunate state of my country, where such deeds are perpetrated, and such evils endured, — evils endured too to no purpose, and inflicted to no end; for though the affections of the people are alienated, their civilization retarded, and their morals corrupted, the consumption of private liquor, is nearly, I understand, as great as ever. The excisemen affect to attribute this to deep-rooted hostility to Government, and a total want of loyalty. This I am persuaded is a misrepresentation, nor do I think that such a motive actuates even one solitary individual,

A numerous class of those who drink whiskey are incapable of acting from so subtile and refined a consideration; and the gentry here are at least loyal enough.

The private whiskey is preferred for the simplest of all reasons: it is as much better than the other as it is cheaper, and it is therefore to be found at the nobleman's table, and in the gentleman's cellar, as well as in the poor man's cabin. So unwholesome is the licensed liquor regarded, that it is never bought by private families, nor even by publicans, except for form sake, and as a cover for their stock. Should any of these send it to a company of cloth buyers, attornies, or even excisemen, it would be instantly sent back; and he would be told to give them *better*; and the better liquor is well understood, though it is never more particularly named. It is like females of a certain description, "who," as Fielding says, "are well known to be what nobody calls them."

Could the great distillers make their liquor equally good and cheap with the other, I do not say that it would put a stop to its use, but it would greatly lessen it. However as long as taxation continues as it is, this I fear is impracticable, or at all events they will think it so. Excessive taxation has caused as many evils in these lands, as ever flowed from the fabled box of Pandora. It corrupts life at the

very fountain, and by base adulteration of the food we eat, and the drink we take in, murders, though more slowly, yet scarcely less surely than the sword; and at one and the same time poisons us in our tea, our coffee, our spirits, and our wine. Perhaps it has done even worse, for it has poisoned our wholesome character, and rendered the English tradesman, who, in his younger days, shuddered at the tale of the Italian bravo with his bowl and dagger, as great and uncompunctious an assassin as he.

Unhappily this evil is beyond the power of parliament to remedy, but it is not beyond its power to relieve this suffering country, from the oppression of the law which I have mentioned. That it will shortly be abolished is I think certain, for I should hope that its consequences were not foreseen when it was passed, and that it was intended for intimidation, rather than punishment. What other may be substituted in its place, it would be idle for me to conjecture, but this much I must say, and I wish that all those who are interested in the prosperity of this land should hear me, that as long as whiskey continues to be made use of to the extent it now is, it will keep Ireland poor, discontented, quarrelsome, and unhappy; and that those who by gentle means, could eradicate from her soil this

destructive beverage, would be her greatest and truest benefactors.

But to effect this beneficial alteration immediately, or even suddenly, seems impossible, for it is not to be disguised, that the habits of the people, as well as the necessities of Government, oppose it. But it is the duty of Government not to aggravate the evil, and not to superadd, to the deterioration of drunkenness, the further deterioration of a system which makes the officer brutal, and the people barbarians; which as the frost does the young flower, nips the opening blossom of civilisation, and like the fabled tyrant of old, wearies itself in cruel efforts, to fit mountain unshapeliness to its arbitrary and impracticable bed.

It is the mere dream of legislation to imagine that these rude and remote districts can ever be ruled in the same manner as the civilised plains and thickly peopled towns. The inhabitants must have larger indulgence, and the luxuriance of their mountain natures, like the plants of their native hills, must be allowed to shoot forth vigorous and unconstrained.

> "Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
> But freely let the woodbine twine,
> And leave untrimm'd the Eglantine."

LETTER XXV.

Strabane.

By the address of his counsel, Maginnis had his trial put off until Saturday; and Wednesday and Thursday were occupied with the trials of his accomplices, as they were reckoned, though, one only excepted, they were all acquitted.

After an early breakfast on Saturday, I walked over to Lifford. A crowd was assembled in the little square in front of the Session-house, and the fatal board of execution was raised for the unfortunate man who had been condemned on Thursday. It is a frightful apparatus, self-poised as it seems in the air, and with no railing or protection of any kind. It is I am told dreadful to behold the wretched beings who suffer there, slowly slide a foot forward, as if to try whether it would support them, and shudder and draw back; and at last with hurried desperation, to tread the horrid vacancy, as so shortly it shall be, and cast a frantic look on the assembled crowd, and fearful space below. If those who delight in sanguinary laws were obliged to witness

their execution, it possibly would abate something of their fondness.

The entrance into the body of the Session-house was guarded by soldiers with their bayonets crossed. It was a formidable array, but I am not prepared to say that it was an unnecessary one. I was scarcely seated when the prisoner was placed at the bar. He was a good looking young man, and was decently dressed in a blue coat, and wore a black silk handkerchief about his neck. He stood firmly forward, and in a distinct and audible voice, stated "that he still wanted two material witnesses, and therefore desired that his trial should be put off until the ensuing assizes." "Every indulgence has already been granted to you," said the Judge, "you have had abundance of time to collect your witnesses, and we must now proceed." "Then my Lord," said the prisoner, with the same firmness and composure of manner, "you may as well save yourself and the court further trouble, and order me to be hanged at once."

The jury was a long time in impanneling, for a number were objected to by the prisoner, but a far greater number by the crown solicitor. I observed, that almost every name to which either O or Mac was prefixed, and which might therefore be concluded to be a Catholic one, was put aside by him. It was

impossible not to remark also, the line of demarcation which party feeling had drawn. Every eye and countenance of the lower class was turned in pity, and possibly in admiration towards the prisoner, while perhaps, with the exception of myself, the leaning of all who bore the garb of gentleman was against him. Certainly the murder for which he was tried was a dreadful one; but the witnesses were all accomplices, and even by their own confession greater villains than he. It was almost laughable to remark the equivocation and reservation, with which they admitted this, nor could all the artifice of the prisoner's counsel, and he seemed an able and intelligent one, induce any of them in direct terms to allow that he was a murderer, though they all admitted it by periphrasis and construction.

The following is the substance of their evidence, which I give as briefly as possible for it is an unpleasant subject, nor should we tarnish our moral sense by long looking on crime.

"Late of an October evening in 1816, the prisoner, and nearly two hundred others, assembled near a bridge, along which the wretched object of their vengeance was to pass; and just as he had put his foot upon it, he was seized and dragged into an adjacent field. In melancholy resignation to the fate which he saw was inevitable, he exclaimed,

" Boys dear, what you will," and almost immediately was beat to death with sticks and stones.

Though indirectly they thus admitted they were murderers, I did not remark in the countenances of the witnesses, the marks of deep, or indeed of any villainy. They were such faces as are generally to be met with among the lower classes in Ireland, where the ruddy cheek and florid complexion, are more rare than among people of the same description in England. They were, in general, very well dressed; but this, I believe, was done for them by the Excise board; and, though all natives of Innishowen, they spoke good English, with little of the peculiarity of construction, which speaking Irish is apt to give, and with as little of an Irish accent. I do not accuse those writers, who represent the lower Irish with such grotesque features, and so full of drollery and comic humour even in the solemnest situations, as guilty of intentional falsehood, but I must confess that I think them guilty of great misrepresentation. At all events, I have never met with any such in the North of Ireland, and the Irishman of novels and dramas is scarcely less unknown to me than a Cochin Chinese.

As the trial advanced, I closely observed the unfortunate man at the bar, and I thought at one time that a slight convulsion passed

over the lower part of his face; but I probably was mistaken, for the upper part remained calm and serene, nor did his limbs, which I saw through the railing of the bar, quiver in the least degree. Occasionally he retired backwards, and wrote notes to his counsel; and I have been assured by him, that they were not ill written, and that the questions that he suggested were pertinent.

The judge's charge lasted better than two hours, and was marked by the same moderation and forbearance which he had displayed during the whole of the trial. If patience be, as Pliny said, an eminent part of justice, he had it in an eminent degree.

Scarcely had the jury retired until they returned, and at the instant a sister of the prisoner's pressed wildly forward, regardless of the gaze of the crowded court on her. I shuddered as I thought of the dread cry which would pierce my ear, when the dire Guilty, which I anticipated, should be pronounced. When it was pronounced against her other unfortunate brother, the lamentation, I am told, was such as would have rent the most obdurate heart. A heavy sigh burst from the prisoner's breast, as if unknown to himself; and mine I am sure echoed the sigh, for it ever vibrates to sorrow, whatever it may to joy; and as I hung down my head to hide him from my view, he instantly stood

before me, not as he then was, warm in life and animation, but as he should, I thought so shortly be—in the hands of the executioner, his face blackened with strangulation, his eyes starting from their sockets, and his tongue lacerated and torn, thrust from his half-opened mouth.

However, after a pause of a few moments, it was discovered that it was not to give in their verdict that the jury had returned, but in consequence of some doubt which had suggested itself to them. As they again retired, the prisoner gazed round him with vacant eyes, and slowly drew his breath like one just recovering recollection, or awakening from sleep.

Hour after hour now flew away, and it came at length to be whispered about, that there was an irreconcilable difference of opinion among the jury. I was walking in the little square, when I saw the priest come out of the gaol, and cross over to the Session-house, and I immediately followed him in. He was brought forward to the judge, to whom I heard him in a whisper say, that he came on the part of the unfortunate man who was condemned, and whose anxiety was become too great to be borne. Not wonderful is it that it should! One o'clock was the hour appointed for his execution, and it was now past eight. During this little eternity,

as to him it would be, he had died perhaps a thousand times; at each moment expecting, at each new face he saw, and each new sound he heard; each time that the massy grate grated harsh thunder on its hinges, thinking to be called to his fate. Such weak beings are we also, and so much under the influence of imagination, that it is not improbable but that the gloom of twilight, added to his mind and dungeon's gloom; and that horrible as was to be the manner of his death, the thought that he was to be turned forth into the world of spirits in the gathering clouds of night, a poor solitary shivering ghost, made it more horrible still. From this apprehension he was released. "He is still a man," said the judge, "though a guilty one; let him, therefore, live until Monday, I will not turn him out to die at this hour."

The priest immediately returned to the gaol, and I envied him his journey, for of how glad tidings was he not the bearer? In the tremendous situation in which the poor culprit had so long been placed, this reprieve, transient as it was, would sound in his ears as if it were an everlasting one. That night I am sure he required neither poppy nor mandragora to lull him to repose.

The judge now adjourned the court, and went to his lodgings, where I suppose he dined. I was too anxious to know the result

to return home, but went into a public-house, where I had some refreshment and stopped an hour or two. I then wandered about the fields, and along the river in meditations solemn, melancholy I may well add, as the scene I had just witnessed, or the almost midnight scene I was looking on. The grass waved gently to the breeze, the water glided slowly along, the sky was studded with innumerable stars, which dimly showed the sleeping mountains all around. And when I raised my eyes upwards to those stars; and cast my thoughts backwards to the youthful days when I first trode those green meadows and sleeping mountains, and downwards to those who in day's brightness and night's darkness, are sleeping as they; I do not say that the pang which wrung my bosom was as great as that which wrung the poor prisoner's, but it was a sharp pang.

When I returned to the Session-house, it presented a different sight from that which it had when I quitted it. The judge, it is true, was still on the seat of judgment, but the council table was covered with a plentiful dinner, and the jury were comfortably seated eating of it. The humane and considerate judge had likewise ordered them a few bottles of wine from the neighbouring tavern. Encouraged by his Lordship's good nature, one of them, though with much circumlocution, ex-

pressed a wish for a liquor more congenial to his habits; and the jury being unanimous, on this head at least, a tumbler of punch was brought to each of them, which he drank in addition to his wine. Some of the fragments were offered to the prisoner, but after an ineffectual effort he was obliged to desist. Doubtless his mind was too much agitated to think of food, but he eagerly drank some beer; and every sound that he heard, and every object that he saw, administered to him the better cordial of hope.

This morning between seven and eight, the judge went again into court, and on summoning the jury, they were found to be still undecided. They were accordingly brought to the verge of the county and dismissed. They had not far to go, for exactly in the middle of the bridge that leads to Strabane, there is a little recess in the parapet, which is the division of the counties of Donegal and Tyrone.

With the humanity which had distinguished him during the whole of the trials, the judge gave the condemned man the further respite of a fortnight. When the guilt indeed of the principal was unascertained, it would have been a solecism in justice to execute the accessary. It is possible, therefore, that this poor creature, who hung so long over the frightful abyss down which, in one way or other, shall be precipitated all the sons and

daughters of men, will be further respited, or may have his sentence changed for transportation. Could I be assured of this, and that he would ultimately be saved, I should certainly go over to see and converse with him; for mind, and mind too in agitation and tumult, is my favourite study, and I could bear to see, or, like the daughters of aged Pelias, even to plunge it in the chauldron of despair, were I sure to be able to raise it to joy again. But I am fearful that even to my appearance he might attach expectation, and say to himself there is hope, when probably there is none. I know how it clings to the heart in the most forlorn situations, and never therefore should we, by our presence, raise, if we cannot realise it, or inconsiderately approach misery which we thus cruelly aggravate if we do not relieve.

I am sure an illustrious duke can reflect with no pleasure on an interview which he is said to have had in spring last, with an unfortunate female condemned for forgery, and who was executed the day but one afterwards. Ill fated female! how little was the shock of her body compared to that of her mind, which, after such an interview, had doubtless revelled in the blissful dream of deliverance and hope! And it was a hope which should have been realized, had her crime, instead of being a paltry conventional one against ill-

regulated society, been only less crimson than blood. When the nephew of the king of England, and married to his daughter too, took that poor sorrowing woman by the hand, he contracted a holy debt towards her, which, in all honour, in all justice, and in all humanity, he was bound to pay; and he should have taken no denial, but have passed from minister to minister, and from minister back to minister again; and, in reply to their heartless reasonings, should authoritatively have said; "I care not for your laws, nor your policy, as often crooked as straight, but I have seen and spoken to that unfortunate female; I have felt the warm grasp of her hand; mine was bedewed by the moisture of gratitude and hope, and that hope must be realized; nor shall the earth tempt me to dash the chalice of joy which my presence raised so high, again cruelly to the ground."

Cruelly indeed was it dashed down, for who shall say that hope did not linger with this unfortunate woman, almost to the last moment; and that even when the neck was bared to the executioner, which perhaps a fond mother had often bared and gazed on before, she did not cast her fearful eyes around, to see from what quarter relief should come. But from no quarter did it come, and she perished for a crime, to which circumstances afford so many frightful temptations, which

involves little moral turpitude, and for which so many had perished before, that, to the gloomy imagination, the Bank of England appears a horrid Moloch, besmeared with human sacrifice; and England herself, high as her name is for civilisation and humanity, a monstrous Saturn, who seems to beget her children only to devour them.

LETTER XXVI.

Strabane.

For murder committed in passion, in drunkenness, or from the baleful spirit of party, Ireland, as the instance I have related, and as many others I could relate shows, is unfortunately the land; but of cold-blooded and deliberate murder, more frequent instances, I verily believe, are to be met with in England than in Ireland. However, I shall wave that question for the present, and give you an account of as desperate and cruel a one, as perhaps has been perpetrated since the days of Cain and Abel. It happened many years ago; but I am not, on that account, the less qualified to relate it, for often have I heard it related.

A pedlar who lived in the village of Dunnamanna, a few miles from this town, agreed one evening with a friend, — the term friend is often very lightly, in the present instance it appears to have been very erroneously given,— to go early the following morning to a neighbouring fair. He was an old bachelor, a money-gathering creature, and lived in a small house

by himself: he was reputed to be rich, probably because he was known to be an economist; or perhaps only because he was a pedlar. The finery of a pedlar's box or pack, coming so immediately under the cognizance of the senses, and dazzling the eyes of the vulgar, almost always impresses them with the idea of great riches.

Whether from this general idea, or more likely considering the character of the man, from a particular knowledge of his circumstances, the wretch above-mentioned conceived, it was supposed, the horrible idea of murdering his friend; though the manner in which he perpetrated it could only be gathered from circumstances.

A man who lived opposite saw, about grey morning, as the break of day is almost universally termed here, the appointed companion of the day knock at the door of his intended victim. The unfortunate man came to the window in his shirt, and looked out. "It's far in the day," said the ruffian, "we have a long way to go, and we must hurry." "Aye, Lord help us," said the poor man, yawning and rubbing his eyes, "hurry, hurry, up early and down late, is the life we poor pedlars lead: but there's quietness for us in the grave," added he, opening the door, and letting the other in, "that's one consolation." Unfortunate man! if it were a consolation, it was one

he was soon doomed to experience; though terrible was the storm he had to encounter, before he reached the still haven of quietness.

At the usual time of rising, people were astonished to see the pedlar's door a-jar. "Eh, Andrew M'Crea," said they, "who used to be so canty and careful, to leave the door open behind him, when he went to market; he must be fe'ed surely, or some great misfortune is going to happen him." By fe'ed was meant, not what you would naturally suppose, but fairy-struck, fatally ruled, or over-ruled rather, by some superior and malevolent being, to deeds that lead to destruction.

This is an universal article of popular belief, among the Irish of all sects, as it perhaps is, in a greater or lesser degree, of the people of all countries, in ancient as well as in modern times.

"Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat,"

passed into a proverb among the Romans, and was the universally-had-recourse-to, and satisfactory explanation of any otherwise inexplicable conduct in nations or in men. Man has many real evils to encounter in his present state, and supposes to himself, which surely is unnecessary, many imaginary ones. He not only wanders blindfold among the

pits and snares of death and destruction, but an irresistible and malevolent power is over and around him; not giving him, if I may so speak, the chance of chance even, but thrusting him into the abysses, into which of himself he might not have fallen.

The door was drawn to and locked, the key was carried home by one of the neighbours. "Andrew maun gee me a naggin," said the good man, "before he gets possession, I can tell him that, and a rasher of the hung beef his mother sent him, to give it a relish."

Night came, however, and no Andrew appeared; nor did he the following morning. The neighbours now began to be greatly alarmed, for this was the fair day of their village, and nothing but sickness or some terrible accident, could have kept him from it. The alarm was not diminished, when they learned from some people who had been at Derry fair, that neither he, nor Sterling, the intended companion, had been there. They now resolved to visit the house. "May be," said they, "we may learn something about him, may be by chance the lad got *doughy*, and may all this time be only sleeping himself sober."

The door was unlocked with great solemnity, and they entered in a large body, less perhaps from curiosity than fear. Notwith-

standing his wickedness, the weakness of man is so great, that when a shocking sight only is the worst evil he has to dread, he wants the courage to face it alone, and requires the support of company. In the kitchen and little parlour off it, they saw nothing remarkable; but on entering the room where M'Crea generally lay, they beheld a sight as sickening to the heart, and revolting to the eye, as it was disgraceful to humanity.

The unfortunate man lay stretched and lifeless, the face was dark as a blackamoor's, distorted with convulsions, and as the head was nearly twisted round, it rested on his left shoulder. The body was literally and actually soaking in its gore; which had flowed over the floor in innumerable channels, in meandres winding fanciful and graceful, as the deed which had spilled it was crooked, barbarous, and graceless. I fear this is not in the best possible taste, but I have written it, and it must go. He had, it would appear, struggled long with the assassin, for the tracks of his hands and fingers in blood, were imprinted on the quilt, the walls, the door, and the windows. The tracks at the two last, were the most frequent, and the thickest, as if he had been striving to make his escape, or at least to call for assistance.

The body on examination was found pierced with small wounds, in number inconceivable.

Like Achilles in his threat to Hector, the assassin seemed disposed, not to kill him there, or there, but every where. Yea, o'er and o'er. None of these wounds, however, separately considered, was either deep or dangerous, and it is probable that the poor mangled being, fell down at length exhausted from the loss of blood, and that strangulation had completed what the knife had begun. The wounds appeared to have been inflicted by a knife or razor, and the state of the corpse was rendered still more hideous by the condition of the hands, swollen, lacerated, and tumified, in consequence of their having in the instinctive movements of self-defence, or of convulsed dissolution, frequently grasped the murderous weapon.

The consternation excited in the neighbourhood, and indeed throughout the entire North, by this most brutal murder, was, as may readily be conceived, very great, and was only equalled by the astonishment, that a Protestant could be guilty of such a deed. A warrant was instantly issued for the apprehension of Sterling, who had absconded from his residence in this town, and had not been seen since the morning alluded to. As the pedlar's-box had been rummaged, and stripped of its most valuable contents: and as on the most careful examination, no money could be found in any part of the house; little doubt

was entertained but that he had gone off with considerable booty.

Independent of those already mentioned, other circumstances were recollected, to affix guilt almost to a certainty on him. We are so formed, that scarcely can even the worst of us meditate atrocious crime, without betraying by our appearance and manner, the conflict which is tearing us within. The day before the murder, Sterling had been seen wandering in the glen of Strabane, muttering to himself, and with countenance as much disfigured as Satan's was, viewed in Paradise by the Seraph Uriel.

The glen of Strabane is well known to all people who visit these parts, and is about a mile, or mile and a half from the town. It is a long and deep valley, bounded on each side by lofty precipices, with overspreading trees. A silver brook runs through it, and bathes the roots of the oaks of past years, while it waters the sweet daisy, the modest primrose, and other wild flowers which enamel its banks. I mused there for several hours this morning, and thought of the story which I am telling, and of other sad stories too.

No pains were spared for the apprehension of the murderer. The above particulars were inserted in various newspapers, and Squire Hamilton, of Dunnamanna, wrote letters to the magistrates of almost all the seaport towns

in the three kingdoms. A large reward was offered for Sterling's apprehension, and an exact description was given of his person.

It happened that a gentleman of this town, of the name of Parkinson, was in Liverpool at that time on business. Sauntering one morning about the quays, he saw a vessel come into the dock from Ireland; and one of the foremost persons who stepped on shore, was this identical Sterling. At the sight of Mr. Parkinson, he seemed greatly confused; but this gentleman, who was totally unacquainted with what had happened, went up and shook him cordially by the hand. After a few moments of troubled pause, Sterling took him a little aside, and in a low voice, and confidential manner, said, you may be astonished Mr. Parkinson to see me here, and you will be still more so when I tell you the reason; but the truth is, I have been very unfortunate in my little line of dealing, and was so sore pressed by my creditors, that I had only to choose between flight and a gaol. I know that I owe you a few pounds, which, small as my means are, I shall now pay you, for you always treated me generously, and I should be sorry you were a loser by me.

Mr. Parkinson again shook him by the hand. "No, man," said he, "I'll never strip a townsman of his little mite in a strange place; if you can ever conveniently pay me, well and

good, and if you never can, the loss will not break me. But what do you mean to do, now that you are here, or have you thought of any means of living?" "No," the other replied, "his only thought hitherto had been to escape from his creditors." "Well, then," said Mr. Parkinson, "I think I can serve you; for there is our town man, Mr. Brown, who is a great man here, and is mayor this very year; and I have no doubt, if there is a vacancy on board any of his ships, as clerk or steward, he would readily give it at my request, and to a townsman too."—"I should like such a situation of all things," said Sterling, "for the further I get from Ireland the better." "Well," said Mr. Parkinson, "I am to see Mr. Brown, this morning, and come and drink tea with me in the evening, and I dare say I shall have good news to tell you."

Shortly afterwards he called on Mr. Brown, at his office, but before he had time to say a word of the business which brought him there, the other asked him "if he had any letters from Strabane, since he had last seen him?" Mr. Parkinson replied, that he had not. "Read this then," said Mr. Brown, "which I have just received, and which has shocked me so much, that I really cannot settle myself to any thing." He then handed him Squire Hamilton's letter, containing an account of the murder, and the descrip-

tion of the murderer's person. "Good God!" exclaimed Mr. Parkinson, "I am not more than two hours parted with him, and in truth my principal business here this day, was to speak to you in his behalf."

Instantly Mr. Brown started up, assembled a number of constables, and accompanied by Mr. Parkinson, searched every place. There was not a single ship in the river that they did not go on board of, but no trace of the murderer was to be found; nor, singular as it may seem, has the slightest tidings been ever heard of him. As he was a very young man then, it is possible that he may be alive at this very moment, and that he may even have read the tale, of which, though he did not furnish the idea, he furnished a part.

That he escaped discovery and punishment, I have often heard wondered and murmured at. He escaped discovery, it is true, but who shall say that he escaped punishment? When he wandered abroad like Cain, without a habitation or name, when in the wide world he could find neither home nor friend, while in the hate of man, the offence of the earth and wrath of God, he beheld what a monster he was, did he escape punishment? The law — but there is a law in every man's breast. He escaped from the executioner; could he escape from himself?

LETTER XVII.

Armagh.

THE weather continues delightful, and I avail myself of it to take a little tour, which I have for some time past proposed. I had intended it for a later period of the season, but emerald as our island is, fine weather is here so uncertain a possession, that on consideration I thought it best to take the benefit of it. I left Strabane, therefore, yesterday, by the same conveyance, and accompanied by the same party, that I had left it before. That we left it betimes you will conclude, when I tell you that humble as was our vehicle, and heavily as in truth it was laden, we that day travelled nearly forty miles.

We had not gone far, when it was discovered that our horse had fared worse than ourselves, and that while we had all breakfasted, it had been brought forth without any. I proposed turning back, but this was unanimously overruled as unlucky. While every thing else is subject to change, superstition alone seems almost never to vary. Nearly three thousand years ago, the sage Pythagoras counselled his

disciples not to turn on a journey, or the furies would turn with them.

Our poor animal paid the penalty of our scruples, for it was not fed until we reached Newtown Stewart. The beautiful situation of this little town, I have elsewhere remarked, and it never looked more beautiful than it did yesterday, with its slender spire among clustering trees, and brazen ball glittering beneath the morning sun. Directly above the town rises the high mountain of Bessy Bell, its sides slowly covering with verdure, but its head still bleak in bog, and barren in heath.

There is a tradition which derives the name of this mountain from an idol Bell, whose religious rites were performed on its summit in the times of Paganism, and were called Baase, hence Baase Bell meant the ceremonies of Bell, since corrupted into its present name. The idol alluded to was, it is supposed, Apollo or the Sun, who was propitiated here by fire, and little favoured as they were by him, was long my countryman's favourite deity. When they committed the seed to the earth in spring, they sacrificed to him, as he then dispels the dreary clouds of winter, beautify's the face of nature, and with his enlivening rays is the grand principle of life to the vegetable creation. They sacrificed to him at Midsummer, that he might bring to matu-

rity the fruits of the earth; and at November, when they were safely got in, they presented to him a sacrifice of thanksgiving. So long do customs continue after the causes which gave rise to them have ceased, that the sacrifice at Midsummer is preserved in the fires, which are still regularly lighted up; and, independent of all association, it is an interesting spectacle, to walk abroad in the twilight of that evening, and all at once to see the grey landscape illumine, and the flames rise as it were by inchantment, at greater and lesser distances, higher and lower on the near hill and far mountain, every where around.

Near the town are the ruins of an old castle, where, in ages past, one of those Lilliputian sovereigns, in which Ireland then abounded, kept, it is said, his court. He was called by a name which in Irish signifies cross or wicked, and that the epithet was a merited one, the following story will show. He had a sister who is represented as having an elegant form, but the head of a swine; and was, therefore, called the female monster. The monarch, anxious to get rid of an object that hurt his feelings, and mortified his pride, adopted the plan of offering her in marriage to any person who should propose for her; but on the rude condition, that after having seen her he should either marry her or be hanged. Accordingly nineteen persons, among whom

was a captive prince, who had agreed to the terms, were all executed on the platform before his castle; and tradition says, the twentieth and last person who proposed for her, was the son of his own cow-herd, but who on seeing her, immediately exclaimed, "cur sous me, cur sous me," of which the English is, hang me! hang me! This ancient sovereign, it should seem, was of a grovelling as well as cruel disposition, for he spared the cow-herd, and had the poor princess hanged in his room.

Imagination, in its freaks, has often thus placed a Gorgon's head on woman's shoulders, and in London, a few years ago, there was a silly rumour of a similar monster, and many ridiculous paragraphs appeared in the newspapers on the subject. But there was no occasion there to hold out inducements to lovers, for as in the language of old stories, she was reputed to be rich enough to feed out of a golden trough, she had plenty of volunteer ones who, in spite of deformity, were eager to wallow in the same sty with her. I am not such a visionary as to decry the commerce which has been so great a means of civilising the earth, but it seems an evil almost inseparable from its nature, that a trading people ultimately value nothing but money. The desire of riches becomes the ruling passion, and love, as well as every other ennobling principle,

feels its baneful contagion. Virtue, said Petrarch, has not a greater enemy than wealth; it was that which conquered Rome, when Rome had conquered the world. It is an enemy, let me remark, which never conquered this country, and I dare say never shall.

A little above Omagh we were met by a young man on horseback, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. The journey he was going on was a longer one than mine, and if he ever lives to return, which I regard as doubtful, it will be better worth telling of. He was thus far on his way to Derry, where he intended to embark, and join the insurgents in South America. What his motives were for this wild expedition, I in vain endeavoured to discover, and he seemed to put life and fortune to hazard, with no more consideration than a girl changes her clothes. Pressed by my repeated questions, he at length said, "that Lord Cochrane was going, and he could serve under him." "How can you serve under Lord Cochrane," I asked, "you who never handled a rope, or probably were on board a ship in your life?" "Never fear," said he, "it's no great mystery, or so many blockheads would'nt be clever at it; and I warrant you I'll soon learn." "I warrant *you*," replied I, "that you'll soon learn to your cost, that you are going on a foolish errand; if the South Ame-

ricans deserve freedom, they will procure it for themselves, and if they do not, neither Lord Cochrane nor you will procure it for them."

This apostle of liberty bestrode his unwieldly steed, like a jolly Bacchus on his tun, and as slowly he rode away, I could not forbear smiling at the singular incongruity of his appearance, and the expedition on which he was bound. I rather think that the Patriots will no more regard him as a powerful auxiliary, than the Loyalists will consider him a formidable antagonist; for so close in our minds is the connection between form and figure, and the moral qualities, that we almost as irresistibly attach good humour and stupidity to corpulency, as we do restlessness, and perhaps malevolence, to meagreness. Cæsar heeded not the fat and drowsy headed Antony and Dolabella, but he feared the slender Cassius, and he had reason for his fear.

Trifling as these circumstances are, I have no others to tell of, and for the remainder of the day we were neither met nor overtaken, but rolled over bog and mountain, and fertile lawn and valley, in all that happy serenity, which the bright sun and clear sky as certainly inspire, as the gloomy November day wraps up the soul in kindred gloom. We are bound down to the earth, by chains stronger than those of adamant, and for our

happiness not less than virtue, are dependent on the summer's sunshine and the winter's cloud.

We passed that night at a friend's house, where I left jaunting car and party, and proceeded on hither, on foot and alone. Transient as was to be our separation, I had a feeling of uneasiness more even than of loneliness, for perhaps the shortest separation reminds us of that awful one, when we shall part to meet no more.

I breakfasted in Dungannon, which is one of the principal towns of the county, and was long the chief seat of the O'Neill's. It was the favourite residence of the celebrated Earl of Tyrone, who so long withstood the power of Queen Elizabeth, and who, subdued at last, less by the sword than famine, had the consolation in falling, of seeing his enemy fall before him; for the wound which he inflicted on her in the person of her favourite Essex, saddened and probably shortened her days.

Dungannon seems nearly of the same size as Strabane, but spite of natal predilection, I must admit it is a cleaner and finer looking town. The country too seems better cultivated; the country people have the appearance of superior comfort, and their houses of greater neatness. But they have long had a resident landlord, while we have none.

Near the town are the grounds of Lord Northland, which, extensive as they are, I nearly walked over. His Lordship is, I understand, in a very delicate state of health, which is no ways extraordinary, as he is, I believe, considerably upwards of ninety years of age. Long life is the first of wishes, and when Eastern flattery had said, "O king, live for ever!" it could say nothing more. Whenever therefore we hear of a very old person, we are interested and desirous to know his manner of life, possibly in the unconscious hope thus to prolong our own. But the causes, alas! are oftentimes out of ourselves, and are dependent on original conformation, on natural disposition, and above all, perhaps, on descent from long-lived ancestors. A great medical writer has remarked, that he has not known a single instance of a person living beyond eighty years of age, with whom this latter was not the case. Still it is certain that equanimity of temper, which we sometimes, and an approving conscience, which we always, have in our power, tend materially to lengthen our days.

The greatest enemy of human life is excess, and perhaps the next greatest is emptiness. It is a mistake to imagine, that a life of labour and scanty food, is either the wholesomest or best; a hard working man is exhausted at sixty, while those who have affluence, and do

not abuse it, are oftentimes healthful at fourscore.

It is remarkable that grey hairs, occurring in early or middle life, do not seem to prevent old age. I have read of a very old man, whose hairs began to assume a silver hue when he was little more than twenty years of age. I have a pleasure, perhaps likewise a selfish one, in mentioning that a moderate exercise of the understanding is favourable to long life; for it seems now an established truth, that, other circumstances being equal, literary men are longer lived almost than any others.

I know not that there has been any thing particular in the manner of Lord Northland's life, except it be regarded as such that he was a very early riser, and that immediately after rising he drank a large glass of the coldest water, which was always fresh drawn from a fountain in his garden; and to this innocent beverage he himself, it is said, attributes his lengthened abode in this valley of sorrow, which nevertheless we are all so unwilling to leave. But on this subject, interesting to us beyond every other, it is not strange that fancy should indulge her caprices, and attach importance to usages of little possible avail. Lord Northland had a Herculean frame of body, little sensibility in all likelihood of soul, and the bland oil of comfort and condition,

which fed the flame of life, was never consumed in riot or wasted by excess.

In the course of my morning's walk I passed through the village of Castle Caulfield, near which are the ruins of the castle where the unfortunate Lord Caulfield was treacherously surprised, and afterwards murdered by Sir Phelim O'Neill. It was here that Sir Phelim tore off the seal from a royal patent, which he had accidentally found, and affixed it to a forged commission, authorising him to do all that he had done. This was long a subject of obloquy against the ill-fated monarch, for whose destruction all manner of causes seemed to combine, and very solicitous were the parliamentary leaders that it should continue to be believed.

Sir Phelim was a weak as well as cruel man, but he redeemed in some measure his errors at the last, and it may be said of him, as of a dramatic rebel, that nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it. When under sentence of death, a full and free pardon was offered to him, on the easy condition that he would persevere in his original story, and persist in his accusation of the king; but he had the magnanimity to refuse. Nor was this a solitary refusal, but repeated in a situation the most awful, and the most likely of any to shake human constancy. When he had mounted the fatal ladder, and at the instant

of being turned off, two of Fleetwood's officers made their way to him through the crowd, and whispered long and earnestly in his ear; "Tell the general," with a loud voice said he, "that I thank him for his intended mercy, but on these terms I cannot accept of it; for I declare, good people," continued he, "before God and his holy angels, and all you who now hear me, that I never had a commission from the king, or warrant of any kind."

I expected to be as unknown here as I was unknowing, but scarcely had I seated myself in the inn, when I was told that a gentleman wished to speak to me. I desired him to be shown in, when I found, though I did not at first recollect him, that it was the person with whom I had formerly lodged in Cootehill, and who, notwithstanding the years that have elapsed, had instantly recognised me in the street. The worthy creature's joy was not greater than it was grateful to me, for sweet it is to perceive, that, amidst the wreck of time, there are those who still remember us with regard.

He would not hear of my stopping, even to eat the dinner which I had ordered, but insisted on my accompanying him to his house, where I now am. I took my valise, which had arrived a few hours before, with

me; and though it is to be feared there are knaves in Armagh, as well as in Valladolid, I had no apprehension of encountering in my old friend's house, either with a Don Raphael or with a Donna Camilla.

LETTER XXVIII.

Armagh.

My earliest visit this morning was to the church-yard, where the wife of my worthy host reposes. It was a tribute of gratitude, could she have been sensible to it, which she well deserved; for during a severe malady, with which I was affected when I lodged with her, she attended me with a kindness which it would be vain perhaps for a stranger to expect out of Ireland. Those who stand the forwardest are not always summoned the first, and when I call to mind my pale and emaciated face and form at that period, and her rosy and healthful one, how much more likely was it that she should stand over my grave, than that I should look on her grassy one.

To her poor sister it is a subject of sorrowful reflection, that she should be buried so far, as she herself mournfully expresses it, from her own. To be gathered with our fathers, and to have our tombs amidst the tombs of those we loved, is one of the strongest wishes of the human heart, yet the one perhaps with which reason has the least

to do. But what have we to do with reason, or what alas, have we to do with ourselves?

From the church-yard I went into the church, and I had here an unexpected gratification, for there was divine service, and both the choir and organ were excellent. How fanaticism must corrupt the senses, as well as contract the heart, when a man abounding in learning, and not otherwise remarkably wanting in taste, compared church music to the bleating of wild beasts? I am sorry to say, that the comparison would be more applicable to many congregations of my own persuasion; for Presbyterian psalmody, as much as ever the Roman calendar did, stands in need of reformation.

Armagh is the seat of an archbishop, who is primate of all Ireland, and as St. Patrick is recorded to have been its first bishop, it is I presume indebted to him for this enviable distinction. It was about this period that Ireland was first called the Island of Saints, and not only were we rid of all venomous creatures, but as a further reward of our sanctity, we had four archbishops allotted to us, while England has never had more than two.

In St. Patrick's day, and I believe for ages afterwards, Armagh was the grand seminary of Irish learning, and it is said at one time to have contained upwards of seven thousand

students. What they studied it would not be easy positively to say, but possibly unintelligible metaphysics, and barbarous logic. But there is a logic of nature as well as of art, and the book of it is in our hearts, and the farmer who turns up the earth with his plough, and looks on the sun by day, and the moon and stars by night, is, or ought to be, wiser and better, than were all these herds of students, with their teachers in furred gowns, and tippets, and corner caps, at their head.

In those days the cathedral was called the church of willows, for as the fashion then was, it was entirely constructed with them, wrought in the manner of wicker-work. The Greeks and Romans worshipped in magnificent temples; our less ostentatious ancestors offered their devotions in groves, or beneath a spreading tree prostrated themselves before the deities who presided over the hills and valleys, and fountains and streams of their sylvan abodes. When at length they came to have fixed habitations, and to reside and worship in houses made with hands, it was natural that these should be made in imitation of their romantic and ambulatory ones.

The present cathedral, though a neat, is not a highly ornamented building, nor did I remark any monument deserving of particular attention, except a handsome one erected to Lord Rokeby the late primate. It was a well-

merited one, for his lordship was a greater benefactor of this town and neighbourhood, possibly even than St. Patrick himself, and expended a considerable part of his large fortune in their improvement. He built churches and bridges, he erected hospitals and poor houses, and he established a library, which is an hospital, as it was well called in ancient Egypt, for the diseases of the soul.

There seemed an excellent collection of books, though had the founder not been an archbishop, I should say there are rather too many polemical ones. However, like elephants in an Indian army, these are for show rather than use, and quietly moulder on the upper shelves, except when the librarian takes them down to dust and air them.

There was a number of old books, one of the most curious of which, was a Latin folio Bible, printed in the reign of Henry the Eighth. As a specimen of printing and paper, it is superior to many modern editions of the same work, and far beyond what I should have expected from so rude an age. The arts thrive fast compared to intellect, for when we look on this Bible. it appears a work of yesterday; and when we think of the gloomy tyrant by whose order it was done, and who by a penalty crueller than that of Shylock, drew not the flesh only, but the heart's blood, from all who deviated the

twentieth part of a poor scruple from his maudlin opinions, we seem transported not three hundred, but three thousand years back.

On the same shelf with the Bible, is the original edition of Pope's Homer, printed by Lintot, whose name by association with that great man, is come down to us almost as a classic one. In all ages poetry has been regarded as an object of reverence, but no poet of the present day, however excellent, could hope to occupy the public attention in the manner so long done by Pope. Intellectual attainment is now so common, and at the same time so desired, that not literature only, but society has undergone a revolution; and may be regarded as a kind of republic, where envy combines with knowledge to prevent great inequality, and while they raise the low, to lop down the tall poppies of Opinion's garden. This equalization of man, as however different may be his outward condition, it in reality is; this contempt of externals, this abatement of wonder and diminution of reverence, this regardment if I may so speak, of our fellows, no matter how clad, or by what names they are called, as poor weak helpless masses of mortality like ourselves, is ominous in my mind of wonderful changes on the earth, before many years.

There was likewise a collection of the Ram-

blers and Idlers, as published in their original numbers. Since that period, better than half a century has elapsed, and Doctor Johnson is now become almost an ancient to us. Yet who, even at this distance of time, can think without a feeling of melancholy, of the troubled days of his sad life, and of the extinction of that mighty intellect, which like the eagle, soared almost to heaven, but is long a mere clod of the earth? Good and excellent man, he is now the subjct of that state he so much dreaded to think about, and between his hopes and fears, of which, as were the miserable captives of Sinnus the pine-bender, he was nightly and daily torn to pieces. Oh! at the last, on the verge of the abyss about for ever to swallow him up, what were his feelings and his thoughts; did he cast aside that hope with which, when the danger was remote, he strove to cover himself; or did he draw the folds of his faith still closer around him, and fall with constancy?

After leaving the library, I walked about the town accompanied by my kind host, who had never, during the entire day for a moment deserted me, but had followed me to the church-yard, church, and I may add steeple too, for with some risk and great labour, we had crawled up there. It is but fair to say, that the prospect amply repaid us for the trouble.

The lower part of the town is neatly built, and on each side of the narrow street there is a flagged foot way; but the upper part is a rude and irregular square, situated on a rough and uneven precipice. Conspicuous as this place is, the good Lord Rokeby must have strangely overlooked it, or it has been woefully neglected since his days. There formerly stood here a cross of two stones, with old basso relievos, representing Christ between the two thieves. It was a curious piece of antiquity, and was held in great reverence by the Catholics, which was reason enough to make it hateful to an opposite party; and one dark night, about two years ago, it was thrown down and carried away. The perpetrators of this shameful action have never been found, nor perhaps have they ever been anxiously enquired after; and those barbarians who deprived their town of one of its greatest curiosities, are still unpunished. For the excesses of fanaticism we can make allowance, but those Goths cannot plead even so respectable an apology, for it was not done in zeal but in mockery, and was a deed compounded of wantonness, arrogance and hate.

At dinner we had the company of a Mr. Tarbet, a native of Exeter, and one of the vicars choral of the cathedral. He has been here, he told me, upwards of fourteen years,

and as his salary is far beyond what he would have in an English cathedral, and he has likewise a number of pupils, to whom he gives lessons on the piano forte, his situation must be a lucrative one. Musicians are so much prized in the north of Ireland, and at the same time so rare, that I wonder more do not leave the crowded streets of London and Dublin, where they are but as owls at Athens, and come hither, where they are so much required. In the town of Strabane, a piano forte cannot be tuned without sending to Raphoe for the organist; and the music master of a respectable boarding-school at Coleraine, comes every third week from Belfast, which is better than fifty miles distant.

We walked in the evening to the Archbishop's demesne, and found no difficulty to get admittance, for the great gate was thrown so hospitably open, that an host under spreading ensigns marching, might have passed. The Archiepispocal palace is a superb structure, and was likewise erected by the late Lord Rokeby; to whom, on enquiry, all the good done in this neighbourhood is as certainly found to belong, as in a tale of our infancy, did houses, meadows, and lands, to my Lord Marquis Charibas. The grounds are not extensive, but they are beautiful, and one terrace presented a view of hill and dale, of hedges, fields

and groves; to my eyes unrivalled, and fully equal, Mr. Tarbet declared, to any he had ever seen in his native county.

Armagh is the garden of Ireland, but as in man's first garden, there was a tree of evil as well as of good, we need little wonder that there should be one here, or that it should be plucked and eaten of. Of the infuriated hatred with which, under the names of Orangeman and Defender, neighbour opposed himself to neighbour, little as you are in the way of such things, you cannot but have heard. Those who have no real evils, as already, and oftener I believe than once I have said, generally contrive to make them; and this seems especially the case with the good people of Armagh, for my companion assured me, that as far as he had an opportunity of judging, the lower classes are as well lodged, and clad and fed, as almost in any part of England he was ever in. For this prosperity, they are indebted to their linen trade, which is thriving, and to their landlords, who I believe are generally resident ones.

The present archbishop is a Scotchman, and is either a son or a nephew of the celebrated Earl of Bute. He is said to be a good and well-disposed, though reserved and austere man; but in truth I heard little of him, for an archbishop is not the object of wonder that he has been. When in spring last I frequently

met the Archbishop of Canterbury ambling about unregarded on his poney, it raised in my mind a reflection similar to the one I a few moments ago made. It seemed, indeed, no kindly sign of the times.

I positively intended leaving this to-morrow, but, willing or unwilling, I must, I find, stay a day longer, for Irish hospitality is not contented unless you stay longer, and eat and drink more, than you had proposed. But it is but justice to my host to say, that he is no more a drinker than myself, for he likewise is in some measure a literary character, and keeps a circulating library, as he did at Cootehill when I knew him first.

On looking over his books I found many of my old acquaintances, and, with a feeling of melancholy which it will be long I trust before you comprehend, I opened the dimmed leaves of twenty wearisome years, and think of the green leaves of my youth's hopes, dimmed now as they. How our tastes differ with different periods of our brief existence, and how dull and unprofitable seemed to me just now the Anna St. Ives of Holcroft, which I read then with so much pleasure, and possibly reckoned among the happiest efforts of human genius. It is a feeble transcript of the philosophy of Godwin, whose opinions are brought forward in a ballet of action, and Miss Anna St. Ives is a kind of metaphysical

columbine, who twists and twirls herself about in the display of them.

It is long since I have read any of Mr. Godwin's writings, but, if I remember right, it is one of this fanciful writer's opinions, that we do not, as is commonly supposed, die from bodily but from mental weakness; or indeed what in this case might well be called downright cowardice, for were we properly to exert our faculties, and to transfuse due tone and tension into our nerves, we might not only triumph over the evils of life, but even those of death. Alas! the while, like him who screamed from the anguish of scalding water, just as he had with great pomp of language proved that there was no such thing as pain, death has already confuted the novelist's, and shortly shall, the philosopher's assertion.

LETTER XXIX.

Lurgan.

WHATEVER may be the actual enjoyment of those who travel, they have always in one degree or other that of hope, and as I have now experience enough in life to know the value of this remnant of Pandora's-box, I journey by easy stages, as much as possible to protract it.

I left Armagh yesterday morning in company with the worthy vicar choral, who was going to attend a pupil in the neighbourhood. Though he was very indifferently mounted, as those generally are who ride on hired horses, like Mr. Burchill, I scorned to walk away from him, and kept by his side until we came to the house where he was going. This honest musician seemed as well contented with his condition, as if, like the royal psalmist, his lines had fallen unto him in the pleasantest places; and even if he had the ability, I question whether he has now the inclination to change. The kindness of the Irish heart, and the hospitality of Irish manners, rarely fail to produce this effect, and to attach strangers to

a country to which they are not more unwilling to come than they generally are to leave.

I stopped for breakfast at the little town of Richhill. I was taken up a flight of stairs as steep as a ladder, and the good woman of the house, by way of apology for showing me into a bed-room, told me that both her parlours were filled; though very differently it appeared, for while one was crammed to the top with oatmeal, the other was occupied by a party of players who were just at breakfast, and she supposed, she said, I would'nt muckle relish such company. It was company, I truly assured her, to which I had never much objection, and with little ceremony I joined them.

They were a small party, for they consisted only of a middle-aged man, two women and a boy. Whatever may be their merits on the stage, they are I fear, in the worst sense of the word, *poor* players, for their apparel was of very indifferent appearance, and, by a refinement on economy which I had never before but once witnessed, they used their own tea and sugar and bread, and had therefore merely a trifle to pay for accommodation and attendance. I joined my breakfast to that of these frugal or unfortunate strollers, and was glad to be able to make it somewhat more comfortable than it would otherwise have been.

As our road for a few miles was the same, we left the house together; and though the landlady on my entrance seemed inclined to reverence me as a clergyman, I fear at my departure she changed her opinion, or at the best regarded me as the good Doctor Primrose was in similar company, merely as a scenic one. The whole property of these poor legitimate children of Thespis seemed like his, to consist in an old and lumbering cart, in which, at their request, I took a seat; but the motion was so rude, that I was soon obliged to descend and walk. The two women remained contentedly on, for, accustomed, as I fear they were, to cold, hunger, contempt, and all the discomfort incident to their wandering and unprofitable life, a rough road and a rude cart would be a very minor inconvenience. They were the more to be pitied, for, like the man, they were no longer young, and the romance of youth and enthusiasm of the stage, which would have supported a girl in such a situation, or perhaps even have endeared it to her, must for ever have flown.

I found their companion an intelligent man, well acquainted with his profession, and the subjects on which it is employed; but with a manner so melancholy, and with a voice in speaking so inward, that one might almost have supposed him to be half heart broken.

Of his adventures, or misadventures rather, in this country, he could not bear to speak; but he dwelt with fond minuteness on those happier days when he belonged to the Liverpool company, where often and often he played along with Mr. Young. It is not easy to conceive a greater difference in the condition of two men, than in that of this poor itinerant and disconsolate player, performing in barns, and feeding like the prodigal in the parable, on husks; and that of his more fortunate brother, faring sumptuously every day, applauded every night, and if not the first actor on the stage, indisputably the second.

Mr. Young is a man with whom I had once a slight acquaintance, and whom I still highly respect, and I, therefore, the more regret that he is not the first, for though I do not think that he now could be, the time I am sure was when he might have been; for Nature bestowed on him a rare assemblage of brilliant qualities, and gave him compass and flexibility of voice, greater than any performer I ever heard. But unhappily, instead of fixing his eye on Nature, he fixed it on man, and in place of endeavouring to be the character of life, he was contented to be that of Mr. Kemble. With a worse soul, in my opinion, no performer could well animate his body, for the tameness of the original, would,

even by one transmigration, be almost lifelessness. Mr. Kemble's judgment has been often vaunted of, but judgment no more ever made a great player, than a great poet, or a great orator, and he crept cautiously along the ground, only because he had no wings to fly.

These poor players lingered with me as long as they could, and passed the first cross-road which led to the place where they were going, to be a little longer in company, to which of late they said, they had been but little used. Ill-fated beings! to have refinement and knowledge, yet to be obliged to associate with ignorance and vulgarity, to feel superiority, and to have to bow down to village pride, and endure rustic contempt and ridicule, gives the soul, perhaps, some of its severest pangs, and is a moral transcript of the punishment inflicted by a tyrant of old, who coupled a living body and a dead one.

A short distance from this town I was overtaken by a funeral, followed by a number of persons mostly on horseback. Several of these wore white linen scarfs, tied with black ribbands over their shoulders, as a token of respect to the deceased. Black which is darkness and negation, by the common consent almost of all nations, is emblematic of sorrow; but the selection of white as a mourning colour would appear strange, did

we not remember that linen cloth is the great manufacture of this country, and that the love of money and desire of gain is so insatiable, that it seeks its gratification nearly alike from the living and the dead. I accompanied the procession into the church-yard, and had the gratification of hearing the funeral service read in a very solemn and impressive manner. Admirable, and I may safely add unparalleled composition, which suits so well the nature and constitution of man, which for an instant dries his tears and dispels his sorrows, and even when he sees those he loved laid in the cold bowels of the earth, consoles him with the hope that they shall meet and love again.

The church-yard had an air of melancholy well-suited to the scene which I witnessed, or perhaps it had an air of melancholy only because it was a church-yard. The grave casts its shadows alike on animate and inanimate nature; and, as among the Greeks, those who touched a dead body instantly washed themselves with lustral water, we shrink from the massy tomb-stone, and term the innocent tree which bends over it, the baleful yew. Even the white scarf which I just have mentioned, and which, curiously plaited and nicely adjusted, might serve as an ornament to bridal beauty, always saddens

the soul which knows its purposes, with transient gloom.

This is a small town, but so neat and thriving, that, by way of distinction, it is, or has been called, little England. It is situated on a gentle eminence, and it is said to command an extensive prospect of Lough Neagh, from which it is something less than two miles distant.

There are two inns, and, remembering the kindly character given by all travellers of women, I stopped in preference at the smallest, which is kept by a widow of the name of Cunningham. At first, I was rather inclined to be dissatisfied with my choice; for, though I was informed I could have a good dinner, I was, at least with equal candour, told that I could not have it for a long time. The careful widow, it seems, had gone to a great preaching, and had carried all the keys, even to the one of the corner cupboard, with her; and, as I had no other alternative, I went there too.

Our temple was of nature's own erection, for it was a green field; and nothing else indeed could have contained the numerous, and I may add, orderly congregation. Their appearance was far superior to that of the same number of people promiscuously brought together in the neighbourhood of Strabane. The

women were all dressed with great neatness, and, their rank of life considered, I might add, with elegance. The wide diffusion of the cotton manufacture has contributed much to the adornment of the female form, in the lower classes; as those who will take the trouble of crossing over from Dover to Calais will have an easy opportunity of judging.

In defiance to the admonition of St. Paul, the preacher was a female; but however she might inspire the male part of the audience with heavenly, she was little likely to do it with earthly love, for she was by no means handsome, and seemed upwards of fifty years of age. She gave us at least an animated discourse, but her action was so extravagant, and she rocked so much from side to side, that it might be said of her as of an orator of old, that she had learned to speak in a boat. In the hymn, a great part of the audience joined their voices to hers, and the full chorus of praise ascended to heaven the sweeter, mingled with the incense of nature from the green field, the fragrant hedge, the streaming sun, and evening sky.

After dinner, I asked for a book, and expected to have brought me an odd volume of Don Quixote or Roderick Random, which, in my younger days, were the rarely failing attendants on an Irish country inn. But this

is an age of refinement, as well as of knowledge; and, in return to my message, I received, with the young lady's compliments, the second volume of Madame De Stael's Germany. It is not likely that this work would be very intelligible to the daughter of a country inn-keeper, for, I should think, that at times, the good Madame must have been rather unintelligible to herself. At all events, she was so much so to me, that I soon cast her aside, and strolled into the garden, where I was just in time to see the sun set.

So much did the solitude of this little sequestered spot please me, that I resolved to stop for another day. It is grateful to stop a day at the country inn in this manner, and, in the midst of society, to indulge in solitude unknowing and unknown. It is like sitting in one of the darksome valleys, or lonesome glens of this romantic country, where all around is wildest nature, and, within a few steps, are the habitations of men.

But I had perhaps a still more powerful inducement; for closing day brought to the gate a wandering harper, and I was no stern Harpool, to refuse to let him in. I kept him playing for the whole of the evening, and, though he probably was no superior performer, still it was delightful to me to listen to him. Those who have refused Ireland almost

every other praise, have not withheld from her the praise of music, and the harp, in an especial manner, is her instrument.

It is curious that, the further we recede from the present day, the more it is praised; and we find the early writers unanimous in their encomiums on it. "The Irish harp," says an eminent foreign writer, "will be found constructed on true harmonic principles, and will bear the strictest mathematical and philosophical scrutiny." That a rude people could invent so complicated an instrument, appears inexplicable; yet, invented it they must, for the ancient lyre, which is the only instrument of antiquity that resembles it, was played with one hand only, and was therefore calculated for melody alone. But not only is our harp unborrowed, but an admirable modern instrument seems borrowed from it; for the harpsichord, in reality, is little other than an horizontal harp.

In those ancient times, the harpers were alike gladly welcomed, and participated almost equally of the hospitalities of the baron's castle, and the peasant's cottage. Notwithstanding, by the slow but sure-working progress of time, the race was almost extinct, and the instrument would shortly have been unknown, when the inhabitants of Belfast, with the liberality and public spirit which so eminently distinguish them, established a harp

society, and created a fund for the instruction of blind and infirm persons, to whom, when their education is completed, a small portable harp is given. My little decrepit performer was of the number of those fortunate persons, and he was enabled, he told me, not only to support himself, but an aged father and mother.

Between the Welsh and Irish harp there is little other difference, than that the former is strung with wire, while the latter is still strung with catgut. How the Irish came to neglect this obvious and material improvement, as in a general sense it certainly is, I do not pretend to explain; but I cannot at the same time greatly wish their harp other than it is, for its subdued and feeble sounds, harmonise better with that melancholy wailing, and if I may so speak, sorrowful sorrow, which is the essence of Irish music.

That neither vivacity nor cruelty is inherent in our national character, may be judged by our music, which does not breathe tenderness more than it does despondency; and if any where a people are to be fairly judged, it is in their songs, for they are no hypocrites there.

It is the fashion of the present day to seek the cause of this despondency in politics, and the depressing influence of events. But men formerly, no more than they live now, lived in

speculation alone; and it is idle to talk of moral causes, when natural ones could not fail to impress such a character on the natives of this wild and mountainous country; where the dark glen and narrow valley is an instrument of nature's own stringing, which vibrates to the wind of desolation that almost ever passes over it, and minds man of his sorrows, as in swelling harmony, or in dying cadence, it seems to mourn over them.

LETTER XXX.

Belfast.

The country round this town is in the highest state of cultivation, but it is not so rich in natural beauty, as either the neighbourhood of Lurgan or Armagh. As to the town itself, it is a great commercial one, and commercial towns are nearly the same all the world over. You might fancy yourself in Liverpool or Glasgow, only that the accent is a little too English for the one, and a great deal too Scotch for the other. The most numerous body of the inhabitants are Presbyterians, and, though myself a Presbyterian, I do not hesitate to say, that they are by far the most valuable body.

To the north of Ireland (making allowance for the exaggeration of wit, and the antithesis of a sentence,) may be applied Voltaire's observation on the English nation, "for however it may be with the top, or bottom, the middle is excellent." The Presbyterians of this province, are still an active, intelligent, frugal, honest and thinking body of men. They are rarely liable to the penalties of the law, and a Presbyterian tried, or at least con-

victed of theft or murder, is a general subject of astonishment, not only to their own sect, but to every other.

That so valuable a description of people, should this summer, beyond all former ones, be leaving their country in thousands, must be a subject of regret to all who take an interest in the welfare of these kingdoms; the more especially as however they continue attached to their country's soil, among many great, they become the greatest enemies of its government and institutions. In America, they behold a genial land of happiness and freedom, which realises their fondest expectations, and they never think but with horror, of the oppressions, exactions, and hardships, which they endured at home; and they become the most valuable citizens, and zealous supporters of a government, founded, as they deem it is, on their beloved Rights of Man. I have seen many hundreds of their letters to their friends and relations here, and, scarcely with an exception, the comfort most insisted on, the comfort of comforts was, that they could there speak to man as man, and that they were not obliged to uncover the head, or to bend the knee, to any stern Lord, arrogant Squire, proud Vicar, or, above all, upstart Agent.

A love of liberty, indeed, is an essential feature in the northern character, and though for

the present it seems to slumber, it is not the more dead on that account, as in time and season will most likely be seen. The tardiness with which the flame of Parliamentary Reform kindles here, compared to the brightness with which it now burns in England, may to many seem irreconcilable with such a character, and has often I know been wondered and murmured at. But it should be remembered, that as repose leads to fermentation, so all fermentation as naturally subsides into repose; and that this question, whatever may be its real importance, convulsed Ireland, and in an especial manner the north of Ireland, for years that England was tranquil. It should be remembered likewise, that by inevitable progression it led to the late rebellion, of which the memory still is green; and no doubt it is held in remembrance here, that England beheld our sufferings during that unfortunate period, not only with indifference, but was the ready and willing instrument of them.

But these feelings are transient and superficial, and were reformation or revolution (in the present state of these kingdoms I regard them nearly as the same) to become a question of more immediate import; were it less a matter of speculation, and more a business of action, it would not in all probability, be the tardiness with which the flame of innovation kindled, that would be complained of; for I

must repeat what I have already said, that a love of liberty only slumbereth, and as Hercules did, when he cast aside the woman's garb and distaff, most likely it will awake the more powerful from repose.

That the Presbyterians of this province should be characterized by such a disposition, while their brethren on the opposite coast of Scotland, are marked by one so notoriously the reverse, will not appear strange, when the relative situation of the two countries is considered, and how uniform and powerful are the motives of self-interest, while those of enthusiasm, whether religious or political, are comparatively fluctuating and variable. Presbyterians here, nearly equally an object of dislike to Catholics and Epicopalians, have never been much regarded by their rulers; while Presbyterianism is the established religion of Scotland, and scarcely is there a family in the kingdom, which, in some of its members, has not received favours from a Government which has so much to bestow, and which it requires much less sagacity than a Scotchman is supposed to possess, to discover it is so idle and unavailing to oppose.

But whatever may be the difference, or the causes of the difference of the political opinions of the two countries, their religion in form as well as substance, is nearly the same. Sermons, and comparatively speaking long

ones, are still the great part of their worship; for they afford occupation to the mind, and exercise those powers of ratiocination that supply the place of ceremonies, which a cold and unimaginative people disdain.

In the church government and discipline there is almost as little dissimilarity, and the general synod of Ulster exercises nearly the same dominion, to that done by the general assembly in Scotland. The synod consists of all the ministers who have congregations, and a layman sent by each parish to take care of its interests, and who is called an elder. They meet annually, generally in summer, and this town has of late years been the most frequent place of their meeting. They assemble in one of the meeting-houses, as our places of public worship are called, and having prayed and heard a sermon, they proceed to business. The first object is to verify the members present, and their right to sit and vote; and they then elect a moderator, who presides over their debates, and who, by a clumsy arrangement that might easily be avoided, the instant that he is chosen ascends the pulpit, from which the moderator of the former year as promptly descends.

There happened to be little business of general interest discussed any of the days that I was present; and indeed the only subject which might at all be said

to give rise to debate, was their place of meeting for the following year, and whether it should be in Cookstown or Belfast. However, as this was a subject of considerable import to the convenience of many of the members, it occasioned a long and animated discussion, and brought up almost all the principal speakers of the synod.

In favour of Cookstown it was urged, that it was situated nearly in the centre of the North, while Belfast, to far the greater number, lay almost at the remotest extremity. To this it was replied, that Cookstown was a mere village, where so numerous an assemblage could not be properly accommodated; that Belfast was the capital of the province, and that it was fitting that their meetings should not shun the light, but be held in open day, before an educated and well-informed audience, interested in their proceedings, and competent to judge of them. The advocates for Cookstown answered, "that the synod had never been held in any place where an audience was wanting; and that a gay and refined one, such as that of Belfast, was possibly little to be desired, as it oftentimes rendered men more attentive to manner than to matter, and more disposed, it was to be apprehended, to obtain the approbation of the ladies, than to give glory to God. They ad-

mitted they were rather straitened in Cookstown, but they were by this means more closely united, and it was a sweet renovation of past times, for ancient fellow-students, borne widely asunder by life's everflowing stream, thus again to be brought together, and to revive the fond associations, and delightful recollections of their early days; while in Belfast, separated after they left the meeting-house, and widely diffused in society, there was little of that genial flow of soul, so grateful to the heart, and more and more consolatory to man, the further he advanced in the pilgrimage of life.

Whatever might be the weight of these reasons, and to me the latter one had great weight, the synod by a great majority decided in favour of Belfast, and the decision of succeeding synods will probably long be the same.

Certainly the audience in Belfast is far superior to any other in the North of Ireland, and from that passion for distinction and desire of applause, which is so inherent in us, and which is one of the many twisted fibres of fate's scourge to drive us ceaseless forward, a better style of oratory it is on all sides admitted, has prevailed in the synod since its assemblage here. Besides, on a theatre where they stand so much exposed, the dread of public opinion, which perhaps is a greater

restraint on all our deliberative bodies, than all other causes put together, checks that disposition to slavery, or at least to servility, to which since the rebellion which frightened, and the augmentation of the royal bounty which soothed the synod, in its construction the most republican assembly at present in Europe, much more than heretofore has been supposed to be prone.

However this may be, it is certain that the debates of a popular assembly, I do not except any that I ever witnessed, impress little veneration, or respect, even on the bye-stander. In a particular manner mystery should shroud religion, its altars and its ministers, as the spreading river takes its rise in the caverned rock. The oracle at Dodona spoke beside the murmurs of a fountain, and beneath the shadow of an oak.

LETTER XXXI.

Coleraine.

I LEFT Belfast yesterday by a conveyance which is now not an uncommon one in Ireland; a jaunting-car that carries passengers, and generally charges what is equivalent to the outside fare of a coach. I was punctual in my attendance at seven which was the hour indicated, but stage cars, as they have not the speed, so neither have they the punctuality of stage coaches, and ours did not make its appearance until it was after eight, and we did not set off until it was nearly nine.

We were at least piously laden, for my fellow passengers were clergymen returning from the synod. They were all young men, fashionable in their appearance, and even with frills to their shirts; but as profligate shopmen are wont to do with their finery, these I suppose were only worn abroad, and were carefully concealed on their return home. Even in my recollection, a clergyman with a frill to his shirt, would have been re-

garded as a kind of moral monster, scarcely less odious than the female one I a while ago described.

I found those young men, as far I mean as poor human nature could be, apparently contented with their condition. Nor, on the whole, is the condition of a Presbyterian clergyman an unenviable one; placed in that middle state between poverty and riches, which the royal preacher so much and so justly preferred; the few acres of ground which he cultivates, give food to his family, and occupation to himself; and his pension from Government, though small, is punctually paid. It is true, that the stipend from his congregation, which was at all times irregular, is now more so than ever; for never I believe, were the people so poor, and they regard the allowance of Government, as an ample compensation for their own deficiences. Besides, it is not to be dissembled, that the influence of the Presbyterian clergy, perhaps at no time great, is of late years greatly diminished; as well from the general abatement of reverence, as from the almost universal opinion, that they are no longer the independent pastors of free men, but the servile stipendiaries of a court.

For this pension, or bounty as it is more graciously called, they are indebted to Lord Castlereagh, and no doubt he was in a great measure influenced to this, by that policy,

often acted upon though seldom avowed, which seeks to lull the clergy into inactivity, and never regards the state as secure, until they are dependent on it. But statesmen are men, and like all other men act from mixed motives, themselves perhaps oftentimes unconscious of, as they are indeed the least accustomed to, the purest of them. A native of the North of Ireland, and of a Presbyterian family, Lord Castlereagh must have had some of those predilections, which time and ambition though they weaken, rarely thoroughly destroy, and benevolence in all likelihood quickened policy, and he was gratified in being able to benefit his countrymen, in directing the counsels of his Prince.

My young fellow travellers were all rigidly Calvinistic in their sentiments, and I learn, that these opinions, which a few years ago seemed to be dying away among Presbyterians, are fast reviving again. Human reason is not, as some fondly suppose, a stream that bears us straight forwards, but a ceaseless tide which has ebbed and flowed from the beginning, and shall in all probability, until time shall be no more.

The doctrine of predestination, or the unchangeable decree of God, whereby he has fore-ordained some to everlasting happiness, and others to everlasting misery, which is unqualifiedly maintained by Calvinism, has given

rise perhaps to one of the most perplexing controversies that has occurred among mankind; and it is not a little curious, that regarded for ages as a theological question, it has of late resolved itself into the philosophical one of the liberty or necessity of the will. Though the doctrine of predestination seems irresistibly to flow from the prescience of the Deity, for how should things be certainly foreseen, unless they are certainly to be; yet to our limited comprehensions, it is irreconcilable with his benevolence, or justice even; nor is it conceivable how he could eternally, or at all, punish for that which he himself, by an antecedent and irrevocable decree, appointed to be done. But it is not for me to decide, or almost to give an opinion, on a subject which not only has puzzled men, since men were first puzzled, but in the opinion of the great Milton, is above the comprehension even of the angels themselves.

> "They reason'd high, of knowledge, will, and fate,
> Fixed fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute;
> And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost."

We reached Ballymena, which is nearly twenty-eight miles from Belfast, about three o'clock. My clerical companions rode off in different directions, on the little palfreys that were in waiting for them, and I sheltered myself in the inn. It is a large one, but the accommodation was by no means so imposing as the innkeeper's name, which is Courtenay.

I was shown into a room where a gentleman was sitting, and as he was of an unceremonious profession, we soon entered into conversation, and a large Newfoundland dog which he had with him, was a better key even than the weather, to discourse. He was a young officer, and had arrived about a couple of hours before me, after a rough mountain walk of nearly twenty miles. After such an exertion, it was not unnatural that he should look impatiently forward to the dinner he had ordered, he told me, the instant he had come in, and in which I agreed to join him. It was so long, however, in making its appearance, and there were so many apparently affected delays, that I at length participated in his impatience, and with no unsparing hand summoned the waiter, from whom by dint of interrogatories we discovered that the coach company were shortly expected, and that our frugal inn-keeper was willing that one dinner and one trouble should serve for all. "Confound the coach company and the coach too," said the young man losing all patience, "do you mean the pole for a spit, or to serve us up one of the wheels, that we should be kept starving in this manner?" The dog perceiving his master's anger, took so loudly his part, that the poor waiter made a most precipitate retreat, and to cast a sop to the howling Cerberus, (there were three of us you

know,) bestirred himself in good earnest about the dinner; and with speed equal to his former slowness, it was shortly laid on the table.

I had here a no bad practical illustration of that good old rule in travelling, to take every thing as it comes, for scarcely were we seated, until we were disturbed by the arrival of the coach, and the bustle of the company coming in and taking their seats. Two of these were old women, and age, however, it may be a recommendation to wine, is none to women; but the third was a young girl, daughter of the one and niece of the other. The fourth passenger was a gentleman about middle age, but so superabundantly attentive to Miss, and so profuse of shrugs and bows and looks, that I did not require him to open his mouth, to be convinced that he was a Frenchman.

He spoke little or no English, yet so habitual to a Frenchman is gallantry, that in his attention to the young lady, he seemed entirely to forget, how much he stood in need of it himself. "De la bierre a Mademoiselle," said he to the waiter, who looked at him without moving. "Bring the young lady some ale," I said.

"Ah Monsieur understands French," exclaimed he in apparent joy, and he talked away with a fluency which it required all my efforts to follow, and which, to confess the

truth, I sometimes could not follow. I had resolved to pass the day where I was, and to walk on this morning, until overtaken by the coach; but good company makes lightsome the road, and I determined to go on with the fair trio, and the lively Frenchman, who talked more than the three.

Little accustomed to see strangers, and still less to see rogues, except in rags, people in an Irish coach talk more of themselves, and their concerns, than in an English one; and before we might be said to be fairly settled, the ladies gave us their history, which had nothing in it remarkable; for that they were engaged in a law-suit, which had nearly ruined them, can hardly, in any country, be regarded as such.

A Frenchman stands in no need of examples of communicativeness, and ours, at the earliest opportunity, told us, that he had travelled over a considerable part of England, and some parts of Scotland; had crossed from Port-patrick to Donaghadee a few days before, and was now on his way to the Giant's Causeway, he would have said, but he could not, I believe, have rightly pronounced the word, had he got the proprietorship of it; though he made many attempts, to the great amusement of the young lady, and apparently to his own. It was now my turn, and this much of my history I told, that I had come last

from Belfast, and was going to the Causeway too; to which, as in courtesy bound, I offered to be the stranger's guide, as far at least as the language was concerned. He accepted my offer eagerly, and with many expressions of gratitude, — for the French are an unsuspicious people; — and I ran no risk, I thought, with him, for it was little likely that a knave should come from Paris, to seek gold among the stones of the Causeway.

The ladies left us at a village called Ballymoney, and we arrived here about ten o'clock. The inn is kept by a maiden lady of the name of Henry, nor, on the whole, is it an uncomfortable house; though, in so remote a situation, I think it may be fairly called an expensive one.

To-day is Sunday, and we amused ourselves by walking about the town, which is an inconsiderable one, but agreeably situated on the river Ban. There are at least two Presbyterian places of worship, but I took my companion, in preference, to the church, as more ornamented, and akin, I thought, to his own form of worship. However, whether it was the heat of the day, the length of the service, or the indifference of the music, the poor man would fairly have gone to sleep, but for the antidote which a Frenchman carries against sleep as well as sorrow, in his snuff-box.

We walked afterwards in some small but

pleasant grounds, which overhang the river, and found in the thick plantation refreshing shade. These grounds belong to a gentleman whose name endeared him not, at least, to one of us, for a man whom I asked called him Lilly, and the violet was my companion's favourite flower.

We had, I thought, a good dinner; but our wine, it must be acknowledged, was less remarkable for goodness than strength. "Voila," said my fellow traveller, putting down his glass, "les plaisirs dont les Anglois se vantent; de beaux apartiments et de belles depenses, du vin comme de l'eau de vie, et de *biff*-steak bon seulement pour un cochon." "You are in Ireland now, Monsieur," I said. "Cela est egal," replied he, "I am just come from England, and it is always the same; bread heavy as lead, and huge lumps of mutton in such weather to make one groan; and then comes the memoire and the waiter, to be well paid for incivility; Ma foi—" "I give up the wine," said I, "the waiter, the bill, and even the mutton; but you are just come from England, you say, and no doubt stopped some time in London; now, what do you say of the ladies? they are superb, are they not?" "They are handsome," replied he coldly, "but they dress themselves so badly." "Prenez de meilleures lunettes, mon brave Monsieur," said I, "when you go back, and look

more stedfastly; the English ladies have always been admired for their manner of putting on their clothes," "Aye, by the admirers of *biff*-steak and brandy wine," replied he, "who know no more of eating and drinking than they do of dressing; but only look at their feet, and compare them with French-women's." "I have looked at them," said I, "and often, for you must know that their extreme neatness has always been greatly admired by us poor provincials; and we are accustomed to hold them up as patterns to our own ladies." "You must see Paris," said he. "I have seen it," I replied. "Ah, no more need be said now," said he "and you have spoken, I perceive, in jest." "I have not spoken in jest," I replied: "for tasteful dressing, I take Englishwomen against the world; and for chastity, against the continent, at least."

At the mention of chastity, the Frenchman, in the phraseology of his own country, faisoit les gros yeux. "Eh, Monsieur, vous aimez le persiflage," exclaimed he. "You be one great joke." repeated he, in English, thinking, I suppose, that I did not thoroughly understand his French phrase. "I do not speak in joke, I assure you," I said, "but in the perfect sincerity of my heart; I think there are as many good wives, daughters, and mothers in England, as in any country in the

universe; this little island in which we happen to be sitting, always excepted; for, in our acknowledgment of English advantage, we have ever had a reserve in favour of the greater hospitality, of our men, and chastity of our women."

My companion's reply, which was a long one, is not worth giving; but I wish that those who cherish such idle prejudices against the French, had heard him; that they might, as in a mirror, have beheld, how absurd as well as contemptible, national prejudice generally is. This good humoured Frenchman, who was a learned, and, in other respects, a well-informed man, was, I am convinced, as fully persuaded, that a virtuous woman was as hard to be found in England, or at least in London, as an ancient Greek philosopher thought an honest man was in his native city.

"You were happy in England, Monsieur," I said, "and should always reside there; your love must, indeed, have been couleur de rose." But it was the language of prejudice, not of vanity or affectation, that the poor man spoke, for he frankly confessed that he had been but three weeks in London, and that he had scarcely ever spoken to an English woman, except to the domestics of the hotel where he lodged, and on a few occasions to women in shops, or in the streets, when he had missed his way.

"You have missed it again," I said, "nor can I for the life of me conceive where you have picked up such out-of-the-way opinions. The palm of gallantry for his countrymen, a Frenchman I thought fairly might claim, but I should never have suspected that he would have sought the prize of chastity for his countrywomen, and I think I might encounter many Frenchmen without stumbling on another that would."

But here again I was in an error, and I found that his opinions were not peculiar to himself, but almost universal with his country people; and that all good Frenchmen are as fully convinced that the English are most unfortunate husbands, as the English heretofore were, that the French were slaves, and lived on soup-maigre and frogs. To their shame be it remembered, that they, enjoying and valuing the blessings of freedom, should have been the foremost and the latest, the most eager, the most willing, and the most persevering, in their resistance to the efforts of a gallant, though at times misguided people, to obtain similar blessings for themselves.

Having talked so long about the state of society in England, I thought myself privileged to ask some questions relative to that of public opinion in France. I might, however, have spared myself the trouble, for as

far as I can rely on my informant, it is exactly what I had supposed it to be. Every successive year there is more and more of hatred to the Bourbons, and hatred to them increases affection for Buonaparte. Of my fellow-traveller's attachment to this great man I could not doubt, for is, with projected head and lowered voice, he confidentially spoke of him, his tongue oftener than once faultered, and the tears came to his eyes.

Doubtless there is much in the character of Buonaparte to excite sympathy, as well as to attract reverence and regard; for a long time there was an almost supernatural glare and glitter about him, which transported us to the classic or romantic ages, and we were even raised in our own opinions, as living in the same age with such a man. Abstracted from all merit, there is in uninterrupted success, a grandeur which overwhelms and subdues, and like Labienus of old, we can refuse nothing to him, to whom nothing seems refused by the gods. But continued success has a period almost in its own nature, and the greater the height, the apter to be dizzied is the head; this great man became intoxicated with prosperity, as so many great men had been before; he said in his heart that his house should ever stand, but Destiny was stronger than he, and threw him down in his pride of place, and considering the forlornness

of his situation, drove him forth, it may literally be said, to feed with the beasts of the field, and to be wet with the dews of Heaven. Adversity, however, has sobered him, and he now presents, to the imagination at least of my fellow-traveller, a spectacle worthy, in the opinion of a philosopher of old, of being looked on even by the gods themselves; a great man struggling amidst the storms of Fate, and with countenance as unruffled as the rock to which he is fastened, is unmoved by the waves which vainly break at its foot.

On the policy which has confined him there, it is not for me to give an opinion, but it should not be forgotten that we are not to live for ever; and that as we judge preceding generations, so succeeding ones will judge us; and that this question will be deliberated and decided on, stripped of our prejudices, passions, and party-feelings, as we deliberate and decide on the conduct of Rome towards Hannibal, or the imprisonment and execution of Mary queen of Scots. The world is an ever-shifting scene, and though the object which Buonaparte sought unhappily is a common one, and, like too many others, he thought tyranny, in the words of Cicero, the greatest of goddesses; yet in the choice of means for the attainment of his object, in the plan and execution of his designs, he was

so far above all men of modern times; the changes which he wrought on the earth were so great, yet so little compared to those, which but for the war of the elements, he in all probability would have wrought; that I should not wonder if to later ages he stood in gigantic grandeur between Cæsar and Alexander, and that the dreary rock of St. Helena, and how dreary it is a three years' residence well enables me to know, would be sanctified by his abode, as to the Crusader were the hills of Judea, or to the wearied pilgrim the plains of Palestine.

LETTER XXXII.

Londonderry.

At an early hour the next morning, my companion was on foot. He was a very lark which sings at the dawn, and the Sybarites, who killed their cocks that they might not trouble their slumbers, would, had he been living among them, have probably done the same for him.

We had engaged a jaunting-car the night before, and we departed while the dew of morn still trembled on the grass, and glittered on the trees.

We stopped for breakfast at a village about seven miles from Coleraine, called Bush Mills. The little inn, or public house rather, is kept by a person of my own name; and it is but justice to my namesake to say, that his house is not an uncomfortable one, and that we had a good breakfast. My companion took a hearty one, and eat no less than three eggs. Certainly he had not injured his stomach by the excess of the preceding evening, for he had diluted the strong and red wine with clear

water, until as little of its colour as of its strength remained.

A gentleman from London made one of our breakfast-party. He had visited the Causeway the day before, and, instead of coming on to Coleraine, had slept at this house; where in comparing notes we found he had better accommodation than we had at our larger one. It is true he came in *a* coach, and we came in *the* coach; and even in these remote parts, that, I assure you, makes a difference.

The name of the inn-keeper being mentioned, the stranger talked of another person of the same name, in a manner that it would be affectation to say, I was not gratified with. However I remained as silent as a young virgin, when her own praises are the subject. As modest I had no occasion to look, for my name and person were alike unknown; like Æneas when he visited Carthage, I love to travel in a cloud.

The Causeway is between two and three miles from Bush Mills, and as our horse was as well refreshed as ourselves, and the road was excellent, we were not long in getting there. We had not yet come in sight of it, when we were assailed by a number of persons who called themselves Guides, and offered us their services. They had all strong claims to favour, which they urged with more violence than manners, and with such persever-

ance, that when we thought we had got rid of them, we only lost them at one side, to see them start up at the other. One read aloud a certificate from a nobleman who had visited the Causeway a short while before. Another flourished the unfortunate Doctor Hamilton's book, on the coast of Antrim, and a third, Doctor Drummond's poem, on the same subject; another was the guide to the Causeway, and another again, like a huge metropolitan, was the guide to all the Causeway. But their importunity, though offensive while it lasted, did not last long, for the instant that we chose a guide, every thing was hushed into quietness.

The Giant's Causeway has been visited by so many, and has been so often and particularly described, that it would be idle in me to attempt it, even were I not totally disqualified from such an undertaking, as I must honestly confess I am, by the imperfection of my sight, as well as my disinclination to such subjects. Merely to accommodate my companion, I toiled for several hours beneath the burning sun, and gazed on pillars of which I could scarcely distinguish the form, and looked on huge colonnades, which seemed the falling columns of some colossal temple, or Gothic cathedral, with their massy shafts yielding to the destructive hand of man or time, and their capitals strewed in huge fragments over the

ground. So active is the imagination, so plastic is nature, and so easily does it assume the forms of our own minds, that a Spanish ship, which had belonged to the armada, coming round the Causeway, fired on it as if it were a battery, and at the time they were so close in with the land, that they were wrecked almost immediately afterwards. So much indeed does the Causeway seem a work of art, even to those uninfluenced either by the deceptive powers of imperfect vision or fear, that tradition makes it the work of giants, and the country people are firmly persuaded, that it was continued under the sea to Scotland, and was the path by which those Irish Tritons made war on the Highland gods.

It is in all likelihood to this cause, that we are to attribute those feelings of disappointment with which many have beheld it, for the sublimity of Nature is in irregularity, and she seems degraded when she counterfeits the trimness of art. Those therefore who seek objects to fill the soul, exalt the imagination, or warm the heart, must seek them elsewhere. The Giant's Causeway inspires none of those indescribable feelings with which we gaze on the wild glen, or hearken to the foaming torrent, or from some high hill or huge mountain, look down on lakes, towns, valleys, forests, and as it were all the riches of the

earth. True it is we wonder, but it is the wonder of reflection, rather than of sensation, and we rummage for it in the brain, instead of finding it without search in the heart.

Such however are not the feelings of all travellers, and many it should seem, have been penetrated with admiration even at the first glance. A native of the North of Ireland, it is not for me to undervalue the grand curiosity of my country; and after what I have said, it is but justice to transcribe the following lines from an elegant writer who has visited it; and whose eloquent recapitulation, remote as you are, will place it before your eyes in form more palpable, than it was yesterday seen by my imperfect ones.

" Here is the temple, and the altar of Nature, devised by her own ingenuity, and executed with a symmetry and grace, a grandeur and a boldness which she only could accomplish. Those cliffs faced with magnificent columns; those broken precipices of vermilion-coloured rock; yon insulated pillars, obelisks erected before Greece boasted of her architectural skill, or Egypt laid the foundation of her pyramids, proclaim the power and wisdom of their Creator This mole too, so firmly bound and cemented, surpasses the harmony of art, and in stability and grandeur sets all efforts of rivalship at defiance.

It is a monument saved from the convulsion which sunk a continent, and produced the disruption of the isles. For a period beyond all written records it has borne the fury of the waves and tempests, yet still it is solid and unimpaired as when it was first laid, and it seems to claim a duration coeval with the structure of the world."

We returned by a different road from that by which we had come, and which brought us to Dunluce Castle. This striking ruin is situated on a rock nearly insulated, and perforated by a cavern re-echoing to the noise of the waves. Its dark walls marked with the mellow tints of time, in some places form a perpendicular line with the rock on which it is built, and in others seem to project or to stand without a foundation, by reason of the rock's decay. Its commanding situation, and its numerous gables and turrets, resembling the ruins of a village destroyed by fire, excite a high idea of its former magnificence, and a feeling of regret for its lost splendour. It is joined to the main land beneath by an isthmus of rock, and above by a narrow arch like a wall, to which it appears that there was formerly another wall of similar structure, running parallel, and that when the two walls were connected by boards, a passage was formed of sufficient width for the accommodation of a garrison.

Without waiting for guide or information, my lively companion stepped over the narrow and rugged arch, with the nimbleness of a mountain deer. It would have been madness in me to have followed him, nor in truth was there any inducement to encounter the risk, for the sight was all from without, and the only advantage, as far as I could understand, of going in, is to say that one has been there.

My fellow-traveller, as we drove along, was rallying me on my want of resolution, when his own was put to the test, by a sudden firing of guns and pistols from a village through which we passed; and at the instant a number of men on horseback, each carrying a woman behind him, galloped madly by, in nearly equal danger to us and themselves. However, it was a privileged proceeding, for it was what is call an Infair, or the bringing home of a bride; and a dangerous business even on the threshold of matrimony both to bride and bridegroom it is, for the custom is to ride at full gallop, hallooing and rejoicing. Noise and tumult seem so inseparable from the merriment, as well as misery of uncultivated man, that in the former whenever I can, though I trust I should not in the latter, like the Levite in the parable, I pass on and take no heed of him.

We arrived in Coleraine in time for a late

dinner, and, in spite of heat, fatigue, and exertion, I found my companion as lively and entertaining as the evening before. It is not to be denied, however, that if I had prized our Emerald Island as highly as the generality of my countrymen, I should have received less gratification from his conversation. He seemed to know nothing of it, except as an appendage to England, and scarcely comprehended me when I spoke of it as distinct. No more account made he of us, than the spectator of the majestic vessel, as it moves with full-spread canvas on the surface of the deep, does of the little boat that is dragged at its stern.

By this unfortunate ignorance of the French, I have known several of my honest countrymen at Paris, as well as other places, obliged to pass off as Englishmen; and to do them justice they were excellent actors, and wondered, and sneered, and ridiculed, as naturally as the originals themselves for their lives could have done. It is an old saying, "that those who live in a glass house should not be the foremost to throw stones," and just now it would be as well for the natives of these lands to spare their jokes, on the poverty at least, of the countries through which they pass.

There was one thing, however, in Ireland, which my companion had often heard of, and

was anxious to hear; though, if he had, he would in all likelihood only have laughed at it. It was the wild lamentation over death, well known by the name of the Irish Cry, but which is now almost entirely disused in the North of Ireland, in consequence, I presume, of the interference of the Catholic clergy, whom circumstances have rendered more objects of consideration, and therefore more sensitive to ridicule. But further enlightenment would have taught them to despise it here, for the Irish Cry will be cherished, and its affecting cadences admired, as long as plaintive melody is relished or understood. It is not more wonderful than mortifying to the pride of science, the magic effects which can be wrought by the simplest and least complicated means; for the Irish Cry consists but of a few words, and the music only of a few bars.

In the neighbourhood of Strabane, nothing that I know of has been substituted in its room, but the clergy in other places, I understand, have supplied its place by hymns in the Latin language, set to the Gregorian music. These hymns are in the Gothic rhyme, so highly prized in the middle ages, such as

> "Dies iræ, dies illa,
> Solvet sæc'lum in favilla."

You will probably recollect these lines in

one of Mr. Scott's poems, for that great man borrows as well as invents, and he might easily have borrowed better lines than these. Nature alone is true, and this allegro movement seems the step of dancing rather than of death.

My friend, for he was really now become such, and I, continued at table till the hour of twelve, when the horns of the two coaches, almost at the same instant announced that, as the best of friends had done before, we must part. I took my seat on to this town, and he returned to Belfast, and I dare say will hurry back to Paris, wondering that he should have quitted its amusements to visit rude scenes and mountain lands. Were I not acquainted with the restlessness of human nature, I too should wonder; but man, by irresistible impulse, is driven forwards in unceasing exertion, to indemnify him, as it were, for the dire and long repose of the grave. This good-natured man took leave of me with seeming, and I am sure I took leave of him with real, regret; for parting with those whose society has pleased us, and whom in all likelihood we shall never again behold, is the tearing of a part of life's scaffolding away.

In meditation I passed the night, and by uncertain moonlight gazed on the trees, hedges, cottages, and shrubs, as rapidly they

seemed to fly past me. No unapt resemblance of my brief journey, which is now so nearly finished, or of this fleeting and uncertain world, in which we have no abiding-place, and which itself passes away like a shadow, or as a post which hasteth by.

LETTER XXXIII.

Strabane.

LONDONDERRY, as the name implies, was built by a company of London adventurers, and it is creditable to them, for though a small it is a beautiful city. The streets are all straight and broad, and the market-place, which is called the Diamond, is a handsome one. The cathedral, embattled and turretted at the eastern angle, has a fine appearance, and I remember when it had a still finer, surmounted as it then was by a stately spire, which was seen at the distance of several miles in every direction around.

But the grand ornament of Derry are its walls, which are in perfect repair, though built better than two centuries ago; the gates are the same, and two of them have, or in my younger days had, portcullises. In those days there were a number of curious old cannon, but they have since mostly been carried away by the Ordnance Board, and appropriated to other uses; which was nearly as tasteful economy, as it would be in the Mint to

melt down a series of Roman coins, and convert them into shillings and sixpences.

After I had crossed the bridge, I turned round and looked long on this ancient city, as in gay panoramic pride it lay outstretched on the bosom of the hill. But how for the third part of three months it could have withstood a numerous army, commanded by a marshal of France, is incomprehensible. The people here have a ready solution of this difficulty, and attribute it all to Providence, which not only fought on the side of the gallant garrison, but blinded the eyes and shut the ears of the unfortunate James, so that he could neither see nor hear with them. It is certain, that in the whole of his conduct there seemed a kind of judicial infatuation, and that his manner of carrying on the siege was not more feeble, than his undertaking it at all was unwise, against which ill-judged act, which poor man he had leisure enough afterwards to repent of, he was importunately advised by the celebrated Dundee, better known to you in all likelihood by the name of Claverhouse.

The road from Derry to this town has a rare advantage in this land of mountains, for it is almost a perfect level, and as the day was fine I sauntered quietly on. I am no wit, and therefore it did not, as it did with one of Pope's correspondents, lessen my enjoyment

of the weather, that I was obliged to share it with the vulgar herd who were working in the fields. It needed not to the poet nor his correspondent neither, for they might easily have found out many other things they had in common with the vulgar, and many too in which the vulgar were their superiors; for it required no great wit to discover how much better the world could do without wits, than without men to hold the plough.

Summer's green beauties are mingling with autumn's yellow ones; and, as I walked slowly onwards, I was met and overtaken by numerous parties of sportsmen, as they are called. It is unaccountable the force of custom, and control of nature; for, were it not for this, surely the cruel deed which cleaves to the earth a poor bird, solacing itself in pure ether, would strike us with horror; nor could we conceal, even from ourselves, that the demon which our fancy forms, is only one who torments for pleasure, destroys in wantonness, and murders in sport. It is, I fear, a truth, and a melancholy and heart-rending truth it is, that man, let him have come by it how he may, has a radical and inherent principle of malignity in his nature, which, however it may be disguised, or weakened by association and circumstance, is always recurring, and, like the cat metamorphosed into a fine lady, he

quits, in the hour of temptation, artificial polish, and is all the tyger again.

A scene which I once witnessed at St. Helena, will illustrate what I have been saying; and, at the time, it made a strong impression on me. I accompanied three young officers on a shooting party, which had been meditated for some days before, and for which ample provision was made both of food and drink. The water is the grand element of pleasure, as well as of business, at St. Helena, and we therefore went in a boat, which, after a couple or three hours rowing and sailing, stopped in one of the lone recesses formed by the out-jutting rocks, and projecting cliffs of that iron-bound coast. No where around was there a ledge broad enough for a man to stand on, and we were in consequence obliged to remain sitting where we were. But our sportsmen were not the less indefatigable or successful on that account. During several hours, they loaded and fired as quickly as they could, pointing their pieces almost directly upwards, for in the recess where we were, there was no room to extend them horizontally, and the frightened birds, struck in the midst of their ceaseless cawings, came tumbling down, in numbers beyond counting, on us, and in the water around.

It was my province to attend to the baskets and bottles, and to take care that they should not be injured or broken by the flutterings of

the wounded and dying birds; and, as I looked on them, and my own hands spotted with their blood, I further sunk my head in sorrow, and, if the expression is not improper, in shame, as I pondered on that unaccountable law of nature, which so universally opposes animal against animal, and man against all. Of my companions on this long-past excursion, one has himself fallen before that unerring marksman, before whom we shall all in our turn fall, and the other is now a general-officer, in high favour with a royal duke, and who no doubt having often since, in the trade of war, slain men, will hold it no very heinous transgression to have killed a few birds.

About half-way between Derry and this town, is a gay brick mansion, built in the American fashion, by a gentleman who had served there during the war, and to which the name of Bunker's-hill was given, in consequence, I believe, of his having been wounded there. When I was last in this country, it was occupied by an acquaintance, and often I walked down to see him, and his worthy and benevolent wife; and many pleasant days I passed in wandering over those green hills and spreading lawns. But no hospitable gate opened to me now, for misfortune has overtaken him, as it had so many before. He has been obliged to quit his delightful habitation, and is at present living in obscurity, in the city I

have left behind. Few as the years are since I was here last, I scarcely knew of one family in which some change has not taken place, and in which the change has not been for the worse; so altered indeed is the condition of the country, that there are times when I scarce believe it real, and could almost fancy myself in a dream.

As I passed a small house, a poor woman came running out, and requested me to step in and see her husband, who she said was very ill, and who indeed was so ill as to be past all human aid; for he seemed to be just departing, and must have died before I reached this. The wretched man, as far as I could learn, had been the artificer of his own ruin, for he had drank whiskey in quantities inconceivable, which had thrown him into dangerous fits of sickness, until at length, by repeated transgressions, he was brought from Herculean strength, to less than childish weakness. This is only one instance out of many of a similar kind, I have witnessed; and I could, for my countrymen's sake, wish that I had the voice, which he who saw the Apocalypse, heard cry in heaven, that I might warn them against the destructive habit, and bid them beware of its fatal snare.

So fatal indeed are the consequences attendant on the excessive use of spirituous liquors,

that it is not extravagant to repeat here what has been often said, that they are more deadly than the sword. War has its intervals of destruction, but spirits operate at all times and seasons upon human life. War kills the body only, and with no lingering torment neither, while drunkenness, baleful as Emilia's curse on the slanderers of Desdemona, kills us inch by inch, body and soul, and destroys virtue, memory and understanding, before it destroys life, and tumbles down the hollow carcase which scarcely can be regarded as a man. Nor do the horrid effects of this pernicious practice end here, but deform the dead body, so as to render it a loathsome addition to the clay in which it is to be laid. Even the very hairs of the head feel its influence, insomuch that some years ago, when wigs were more generally worn than they now are, the London wig makers instantly recognised the hair which had been taken from a drunken man, and gave less for it than for that of others.

Though these poor women had called me in to their sick relation, as they only termed him, they were as well convinced as I was, that he was dying; and with that unaccountable promptitude which attends the people here in their preparations for death, and which contrasts so much with their habitual dilatoriness, they were in an under voice, almost the whole time that I stopped, carrying on a conversa-

tion about the poor struggling creature's wake and funeral.

Not far distant from this house, is the little wood of Cloghogle, which may be regarded in a great measure as the classic ground of this country, and was once the scene of a very tragical event, which is still the scarcely ceasing tale of the old, and almost as eagerly listened to by the young. A very beautiful young lady, the daughter of a gentleman of the name of Knox, who lived in the neighbourhood of Derry, had been addressed by a well-known character, called Macnaghton. Mr. Macnaghton was a man of great vivacity and elegance of manners, and it was not wonderful that he should make an impression on the fancy of a girl, or that she should become attached to him; but as he was equally dissipated and embarrassed in his affairs, he was little likely to please the father, and the young lady dutifully yielded her inclinations to his remonstrances. The disappointed and desperate lover was loud in his complaints and threats of vengeance, and to be rid of his importunities, Mr. Knox, by the advice of his friends, resolved to leave his dwelling, and to take his family for a few months to Dublin.

They were thus far on their way to this town, where they meant to sleep the first night, when the coach was stopped by Mr. Macnagh-

ton, accompanied by two or three of his tenants, with the intention it is supposed of taking out the young lady, whom in consequence of a foolish betrothment, in which in a moment of fondness he had entangled her, he called his wife. Mr. Knox, who had foreseen the possibility of such an attempt, was not only armed himself, but was accompanied by a faithful follower of the family on horseback, who was well armed also. A contest ensued, in which Mr. Macnaghton was, as he thought, mortally wounded, and in the very act of falling, whether inadvertently or otherwise, no one has ever been able positively to say, the pistol in the wretched man's hand went off, and the contents most unfortunately were lodged in Miss Knox's side. An uncle of my mother's, who was a surgeon and apothecary in this town, was immediately brought out, but he only arrived in time to witness the last struggle of this young and heroic victim to filial love, as she truly was, for quick as lightening as she saw the pistol descending, in the generous design of saving him, she started forward, and clasped her father round the neck.

Mr. Macnaghton rode a short way across the country, but unable by the anguish of his wounds, and weakness from loss of blood, to proceed far, he stopped at a lone country house, scarcely three miles from the fatal spot,

where that very evening he was taken by a party of light horse, and brought a prisoner to this town. Mr. Sproulle, the relation I have mentioned, attended him likewise; but long before his wounds were healed, a special commission was appointed for his trial, and was held in the market-house; where after he had by his ingenuity and eloquence, protracted the proceedings nearly a week, he was convicted, and three days afterwards he was executed on the road between Lifford and this town.

This is a very brief abridgment of a story, which I have heard a thousand times, and which I should tell you at far greater length, but that it is already told, for Macnaghton, and the Stanley of a Northern Irish Tale, are the same. Mr. Macnaghton is buried in our church-yard, and so powerful is the sympathy which binds the people of this land to sorrow, and above all to the sorrow of a gentleman and of romance, that the green grass which waves over it, is possibly to this day watered by the tears of those who visit it; and the tears of thousands were literally shed on his ill fated body, as it was borne to its untimely abode.

It is a circumstance, perhaps, worth recording, not only for its own sake, but as illustrative of the disposition of the people of whom I write, that when the rope broke by

the violence with which he threw himself from the ladder, a shout of triumph was heard among the immense crowd, who were the sorrowful witnesses of his execution. I know not but that is still a matter of belief with the ignorant in many parts of Ireland, that when such an accident occurs, the purposes of justice are fulfilled; and those who knew better regarded it as a contrivance of escape, and favoured it as much as possible, by running away in different directions, and leaving the space round the gallows clear. The soldiers ran away in like manner, they broke their ranks, and officers and men were huddled together in various little groups.

Mr. Macnaghton's escape was so certain, that had he walked away at that instant, no one would have been found to have stopped him; but he availed not himself of this glorious opportunity, and continued quietly sitting on the ground, until the sheriff, soldiers, and crowd, returned slowly and reluctantly round him again. As he was raising himself, he put forth his hand and took a pinch of snuff from a gentleman who was present, remarking, with the most perfect composure, that Lord Ferrers was in the right, for it was not so much death, as the thought of it, which was terrible. To add to the singularity of the whole of this business, it strangely so happened, that a nephew, or a very near relation of that

unfortunate nobleman, was either the commander, or an officer belonging to a frigate which then lay at Loughswilly, and was one of the group assembled on this melancholy occasion, and to whom the observation was addressed.

Mr. Macnaghton's conduct, when he might at least have endeavoured to escape, is still attributed to deep-rooted sorrow, and a love of death rather than of life. But most likely it was not want of love of life, but of presence of mind. The circumstance was unexpected; and he was overwhelmed, stupified, and unprepared. In the instant of death, man almost always loses the courage that struggles, though he may have the fortitude that endures.

LETTER XXXIV.

Strabane.

TIME is pictured with wings and feet of wool, to show how imperceptibly and swiftly it passes, and since I have come abroad on this journey, months which, looked back upon, seem only as moments, are flown away, and gone to join the years beyond the flood. For the present my wanderings are ended, and I shall remain for some time longer where I am. I should, perhaps, be elsewhere, but just now I cannot, for my heart cleaves to my native mountains with increasing fondness, and time, which has so much loosened the ties which held me to my country people, only endears to me these blue hills and green valleys the more. Here I call to mind those happy times when, I first trod them, or those restless ones, when in early life, removed to a distance, I had no pleasure which did not intermingle with the remembrance of them. Here long-faded ideas rise to my recollection in primitive freshness, and while I live in the days that are, like one that has no pleasure in them, imagination is always bearing me back to

those kindlier remoter ones. Those days, with your good leave, we will live over again together, and during the remainder of my abode here, our converse shall be of other years, and of the incidents of my various and desultory life. Hitherto I fear I have proved an unamusing companion, but without presumption I may promise to be less so in future, for though I have not done, I may venture to say that I have seen much, and, little a performer, I have not been altogether an unobservant spectator of life.

But before I indulge in this dream, pleasing though melancholy, I shall make a few observations on the country I have just passed over; but they shall be very few, for neither is this a dream, nor if it were, would it be a pleasing one. The situation, indeed, of the North of Ireland, I have no hesitation in saying, is a most deplorable one, and so much changed from what it was ten years ago, that I can scarcely think it is the same land.

The late war, while it aided party and increased taxes, increased wealth; and the natural consequence of wealth, refinement in manner of living, improvement in dressing, and a taste for luxuries followed. Of a social disposition as the people are, and captivated by unaccustomed enjoyment, it is possible

that even then this prosperity was more apparent than real, and though something was gained, that little was saved. Besides, unconnected as landlords and tenants unfortunately now are, by those ties which bound them together formerly so closely, rents were raised to an enormous pitch, and even in those days paid with difficulty and murmuring, are now scarcely paid at all. With the stoppage of the war, trade seemed likewise to stop, and like a bow too forcibly bent, society, with hideous recoil, flew back to the opposite extreme; for as if prosperity, which is not very natural to any land, should be particularly unnatural to Ireland, the terrible harvest of the year before last, succeeded to the peace, heaped misery on misery, disease on poverty, and generated the fever and famine of which I have already spoken.

The northern farmer, who in general cultivates only a few acres of land, scarcely able to feed his family, and totally unable to relieve the hundredth part of the misery which daily and hourly knocked at his door, fell unavoidably into arrears. Humane landlords spared their tenants, and though the motives which dictated such conduct were in the highest degree praiseworthy, there were occasions in which it rather did harm than good, for from the supineness incident to our na-

ture, many, because they could not pay all, relaxed in their efforts and paid none at all.

But there is little danger that humanity in the excess, should ever be very injurious to mankind, and the great suffering sprung from the opposite cause. Selfish landlords and agents filled the pounds with cattle, seized and auctioned grain, household furniture, beds, bedding, and whatever else they could lay hands on; and by this cruel as well as foolish policy, while they gained transient payment, incalculably added to the aggregate of suffering, and irreparably injured their struggling, and to their further shame I must add, meritorious tenantry. The linen-trade felt the general depression; money became so scarce that numbers could not purchase even the flax-seed that was necessary to sow their ground, and thousands of hogsheads, after being in vain offered for sale here, were shipped for England and Scotland, and sold at an immense loss to make oil of.

By the combination of these causes and many others, this country a short while ago, presented not so much a melancholy, as a frightful spectacle; the abode once of comfort, it seemed now a huge arena of misery, and lawsuits, ejectments, distresses, imprisonments, assailed those whom the fever had spared.

But violence has in its own nature a period

at which it must cease, and the disease in a measure has wrought its own cure. There are few law suits, for of what avail to go to law, where there are so little means of payment; and besides many to whom large sums are owing, actually cannot command the trifle necessary to go to law. In many places society is transported back to the practice of the ruder ages, and payments in kind are becoming the commonest of any. A few weeks ago a relation of mine disposed of a field of corn which was ready for cutting, for which, according to the valuation of two men who viewed it, she is in December to get an equivalent quantity of oatmeal. A poor man who has a few acres of land from her, and is now nearly three years in arrears, expects, as the harvest is so favourable a one, shortly to pay a part of it, but not in money, but by giving her potatoes and turf. I know not that this has ever occurred to lawyers on circuit, as has been reported, but I am sure that surgeons and apothecaries, physicians are here pretty much out of the question, have oftentimes been paid in a similar manner.

That independent of all political opinions or prejudices, such a state of things should produce great discontent need not be told. So deep-rooted indeed is the discontent, and so general is the perception of misery, that it has generated a sullen gloom, and listless in-

difference to political speculation, as too remote in its consequences, and totally inadequate as a remedy to the evils of the times. But hope, as I have often had occasion to remark, lives even in the chill bosom of despair, and I believe it is not an uncommon opinion here, that a great change is at hand, and that Ireland need not stir in it, as it will be effected with great ease and little bloodshed by England; of whose control over government, favoured and attended to as they have been accustomed to see it, my country-folks are apt to entertain exaggerated ideas.

I am not prepared to say that the people of England, or any considerable number even of them, are in the inclination to bring about this great change, in the sense in which I presume it is here understood; but even if they were, I do not think that in the present state of Europe it would be in their power, and it is well for them that it is not, for surely it would not be without bloodshed. Circumstances have made a frightful alteration in the English character, but even though they had not, society can never be resolved into its elemental particles without dire convulsion, and when evil passions can be indulged in without control, small is the difference between civilised and uncivilised man. In every situation, and every age in which he has hitherto shown himself, he is a tyger, who,

when the restraints of fear and force, and usage and opinion are removed, plays all the mad pranks, and does all the mischiefs of one. In our own days we have seen or heard of the rebellion in this kingdom; and in France, the most civilized and humanized country in the universe, where a boxing match in the street was started from in horror, and where murder could not be endured even on the stage, we know of the dread atrocities that were done. It is the most miserable, therefore, of all deceptions to imagine that in England, pressed down by poverty and loaded with taxes, corrupted by luxury, by dominion in the east, and the slave-trade in the west, a revolution should not produce those scenes of horror that it has done elsewhere; or that a people trained and habituated to sights of brutality, and like the ancient Romans, with bread for their nourishment, for their amusement demanding blood, should not in the phrenzy of unbounded license, shed it in pailfuls; or that the evil passions which would then be set afloat, should not crimson still deeper the red rose, than even it has done the white lily, or our mountain heath bell.

But not to tread on ground so slippery, and waving questions of a nature so delicate, it is certain that the actual situation of Ireland is a heart-rending one, and sad it is to cast the eye on the blue sky, and green hill, and re-

posing valley, of this delightful summer's day, and to behold the wretched peasant's hovel, and the wretcheder beggar bearing his load of misery about. It is sad to contemplate this fertile land, deserted or neglected by its gentry, its natural guardians and protectors, and leaving their poor tenantry to the mercy of servile and rapacious agents, who shear the flocks which they were appointed to tend, and turn them out in shivering and unshapen nakedness, to meet the storms of these pitiless times. To the absence of those people, much of the misery of Ireland is attributable, and heavy in all probability will be its re-action on themselves, for their shameful negligence of those to whom they owe their means of living, and their cruel and thoughtless abandonment of them. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise," (saith the Lord,) "I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

I express myself more warmly than I am wont, but I cannot forbear, for the history of Ireland is a melancholy one, and melancholy is it to think, that time, which gives relief to the sufferings of others, seems only to give increase to her's. That in this enlightened age, and under a British Government, she should endure as great evils as in the rudest times, and under the most barbarous one;

that whatever was of good in her cup, should, by a wretched fatality be converted into evil, and that all kinds of causes have combined in plunging her into wretchedness; that moral as well as natural ones have aggregated to blight her happiness; that the storms of Europe are concentrated in louder tempest on her forlorn head; and that, situated in the waste of the earth as of the Atlantic, she should meet the first, and feel the most and the longest, the howling blast and gathering wintry wave of climate, situation, fortune, and time. Even that Atlantic which bore to the New World the crimes of the Old, bore back to Ireland, who was in no degree their participator, a fell portion of the punishment of them; for it is my decided opinion, that much of the actual misery, of this province at least, is owing to the undue cultivation of the potatoe, which a few years back, confined as it ought to be to the garden, like the bramble, has now overrun every spot almost to the mountain-top.

The multiplication of human beings by this means, is far beyond what the earth can properly nourish, and these bleak and misty hills, fit habitations alone for shepherds and their flocks, are now thickly swarming with men. Far better not to be, than to be for purposes of misery, and to be trodden on and oppressed; and trodden on and oppressed man ever will be when he is too abundant, and, like

every other object, to be valued, he must be rare.

The superabundant population of Ireland is not the parent evil, but it aggravates every other. Partial emigration has only fed the flame, and besides that emigration is almost exclusively Presbyterian,— the sturdy though decaying oak of this forlorn wilderness of man. Reared with high ideas of himself, and with the remembrance full in his mind of those days, when his ancestors, bearing the favoured name of Protestants, like Roman citizens in a remote province, lived on a footing of equality almost with the highest, he cannot accommodate himself to the degradation wrought in his once lofty condition, and he takes refuge in America from unaccustomed misery, where his perseverance and industry soon procure him independence and affluence.

The Catholic, on the contrary, hardly ever emigrates. To him the evil of the times is comparatively a slight one, for neither he nor his immediate ancestors ever knew a much better manner of living, and when he has a cabin to shelter himself in, and potatoes in abundance to eat, in food and lodgment he seems to require nothing more. Long trampled on too and oppressed, he is subservient when he is not turbulent, and, thoughtless of remote consequences, and fondly attached to

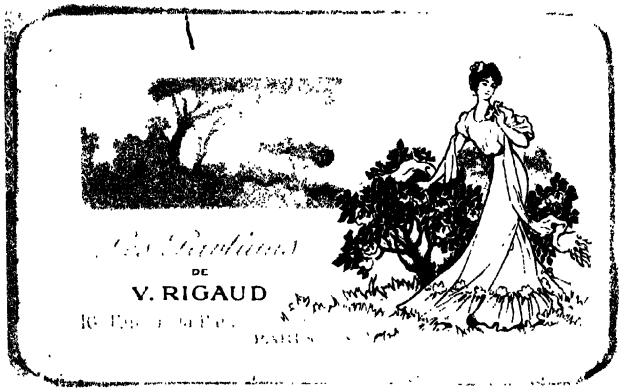
his country, to the soil, to the sod as he affectionately terms it, he eagerly takes land at any rent, and bows down before greatness, or its representation, in all that lowliness of prostration, which delegated greatness in a particular manner so loves. In a contest for land therefore he is as sure to outbid, as by avaricious and short-sighted policy, he is to be preferred to his more unbending Presbyterian antagonist; and scarcely is he settled when he takes a wife, and begets children to inherit his miseries, and possibly to avenge them.

Thus does even-handed justice commend the ingredients of the poisoned chalice to our own lips; thus are the wrongs of the ill-fated Catholics, by a re-action lamentable though not wonderful, falling on ourselves; thus is their degradation working the expulsion of the Protestants, and what further it may work, I had rather that time than I should tell. I am sure that, in the present state, matters cannot very many years longer continue. Fever and famine, as well as emigration, operate too slowly, and it is only the evil passions of man that are powerful to destroy. I may be wrong, and sincerely I wish that I may, but I fear there is concentrated in Ireland causes sufficient to erase half the actual generation from the earth. It is a sleeping volcano, in which the fire of ages

is pent up. To those, I am not one of them, who weigh remote and contingent good against certain and immediate evil, it may be a consolation to consider that the volcano, which overwhelms cities and destroys thousands, gives heat and fertility to the earth.

THE END.

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